Summer 1984
Volume 28 no 2 (121)
£5.00 $10.00

SURVEY

a journal of East & West studies

HOW VULNERABLE IS THE WEST?

Richard Pipes Elliot R. Goodman

CHINA'S MIDWINTER SPRING

Robin Munro

OUT OF THE MEMORY HOLE: HUNGARY

Charles Gati Gyorgy Krasso

ORWELL

Lewis S. Feuer Leopold Labedz

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Editor: Leopold Labedz

International Advisory Board

Enzo Bettiza ..... *European Parliament*
François Bourricaud ..... *University of Paris*
Zbigniew Brzezinski ..... *Columbia University*
Alan Bullock ..... *University of Oxford*
Maurice Cranston ..... *London School of Economics & Political Science*
Melvin Croan ..... *University of Wisconsin*
Colin Crouch ..... *London School of Economics & Political Science*
François Duchêne ..... *University of Sussex*
Edwin J. Feulner Jr ..... *The Heritage Foundation, Washington*
Giorgio Galli ..... *Critica Sociale, Milan*
Pierre Hassner ..... *Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, Paris*
Masamichi Inoki ..... *Kyoto University*
James Joll ..... *London School of Economics & Political Science*
Karl Kaiser ..... *University of Cologne*
Ivo John Lederer ..... *New York*
Michael Leifer ..... *London School of Economics & Political Science*
John Wilson Lewis ..... *Stanford University*
Richard Löwenthal ..... *Free University of Berlin*
Alasdair MacIntyre ..... *Boston University*
Donald MacRae ..... *London School of Economics & Political Science*
Mark Mancall ..... *Stanford University*
Ali Mazrui ..... *University of Michigan*
Hugh Seton-Watson ..... *London University*
Soedjatmoko ..... *The United Nations University, Japan*
Theo Sommer ..... *Die Zeit, Hamburg*
Leonard Sussman ..... *Freedom House, New York*

Survey is published under the auspices of the London School of Economics & Political Science

Associate Editor
Gerald Frost

Assistant Editor
Teresa Cherfas

Editorial Assistant
Rebecca Penrose

Editorial Office
Ilford House, 133 Oxford Street, London W1R 1TD (Tel. 01-734 0592)

Subscription Office
59 St. Martin's Lane, London WC2N 4JS (Tel. 01-836 4194)

Annual Subscription
UK £17·00 * Elsewhere £20·00 (including surface postage)
USA $39·00 (airspeeded)
* Airmail rates available on request
Per copy UK £5·00 US $10·00 (postage/packing UK 75p US $1·25)

Manuscripts
Articles should be submitted in duplicate to the editorial office. They should be typed in double-spacing and, preferably, conform to the house style of *Survey*.

Copyright © *Survey* 1984
ISSN 0039–6192

Survey magazine is published quarterly by *Survey* Ltd. in association with the

INSTITUTE FOR EUROPEAN DEFENCE & STRATEGIC STUDIES

Produced in cooperation with Freedom House (New York)

US Mailing Agent: Expediters of the Printed Word Ltd., 527 Madison Avenue, Suite 1217, New York 10022. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y.

Printed in Great Britain by The Eastern Press Ltd., London and Reading

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Summer 1984
Volume 28
no 2 (121)

SURVEY
a journal of East & West studies

How Vulnerable Is The West?

Survival Is Not Enough ..... *Richard Pipes* 1
The Brezhnev-Andropov Legacy ..... *Elliot R. Goodman* 34

China's Midwinter Spring

China's Democracy Movement ..... *Robin Munro* 70

Out of the Memory Hole: Hungary

The Democratic Interlude In Post-War Hungary .. *Charles Gati* 99
The Memory of the Dead: Interview With Gyorgy Krasso 135

Orwell

What Orwell Means For Our Time ..... *Lewis S. Feuer* 155
Will George Orwell Survive 1984? ..... *Leopold Labedz* 165

Letters to the Editor

Leonard Schapiro Graduate Studentship Appeal 210

Our Contributors 211

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ZESZYTY LITERACKIE

A Polish Literary Review

No 6 Spring 1984 includes articles by:

Adam Michnik
Vaclav Havel
Nadezhda Mandelstam
Stanislaw Wygodzki
Aleksander Wat
Isaiah Berlin
Wojciech Karpinski
Stanislaw Baranczak

No 7 Summer 1984 includes articles by:

Czeslaw Milosz
Marina Tsvetaeva
Heinrich Böll
Adam Zagajewski
Leszek Kolakowski
Lidia Chukovskaya
Adam Michnik
Piotr Guzy

Annual subscription: 145F $20.00
airmail: 180F $25.00

Single copies: 41F $6.50
airmail: 47F $8.00

Available from:
Cahiers Litteraires
37 rue Geoffroy St. Hilaire
75005 Paris
France

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Survival Is Not Enough

How Vulnerable is the West?*

Richard Pipes

SOVIET leaders claim, with unconcealed pride, that they approach every problem that confronts them in a scientific manner. By this they mean that they act neither on emotional impulses nor out of moral considerations, but always seek to determine dispassionately, first the laws that govern the business at hand, then the " objective factors " of the situation, and finally, where pertinent, the " correlation of forces " between the contending parties. In their dealings with foreign powers, they try to initiate actions or respond to the actions of others in accordance with a systematic assessment of the correlation of forces. Whether politics in fact lends itself to such scientific management is questionable; at any rate, frequent Soviet foreign policy failures suggest that the appropriate methodology has not yet been discovered. Nevertheless, it is true that the individuals who make foreign policy in communist societies analyse and weigh more carefully the factors likely to influence the outcome of political or military initiatives than is the case with their democratic counterparts. This habit the communists first acquired in the revolutionary underground. Experience taught them long ago that, when engaging a superior opponent (and until they triumph, revolutionaries are by definition weaker than the governments they seek to overthrow), one must always act with utmost caution, paying close attention to the correlation of forces and underestimating rather than overestimating one's own strength. In as much as the trend of history is on the side of communism anyway, there is no point in precipitating events when circumstances appear unfavourable; one merely has to wait for the correlation of forces to shift to one's advantage.

We have no knowledge how the Soviet leadership assesses its strengths and weaknesses in the global correlation of forces. A hypothetical balance-sheet, however, might look as follows:

Soviet strengths:

—A unique geopolitical situation that assures the USSR of relative immunity from conquest by hostile powers and yet allows it to probe for and exploit such opportunities for expansion as develop on the other side of its immensely long frontier with Europe and Asia;

—Virtually complete control of its population and resources, unconstrained by constitution, representative bodies, or overt public opinion,

* Extract from *Survival Is Not Enough* by Richard Pipes to be published in 1985 by Simon and Schuster, New York.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with the resulting ability to coordinate political, military, economic and ideological instrumentalities in a Grand Strategy;

—The opportunity to exploit to the fullest the internal differences in democratic societies without fear of being subjected to the same treatment; greater unity within its imperial bloc than is the case with the opponents' loose alliance of sovereign and democratic states.

Soviet weaknesses:

—An economy that, owing to the country's inherent poverty and an inefficient, heavily politicized method of organization, cannot adequately support the regime's global ambitions;

—A political system that for all its outward solidity is ill-suited to cope with emergencies, such as political succession or foreign failures; because its domestic authority rests largely on the population's belief that it is invincible, the regime always faces the risk that humiliation abroad will subvert its power at home;

—The danger that military involvement abroad may lead to a conflict with the United States and unleash nuclear war;

—The unpopularity of Soviet-style communism among the world's masses and the absence of an attractive culture or life-style.

This particular combination of strengths and weaknesses shapes Soviet Grand Strategy. Its relatively weak economy and its unappealing culture do not permit the Soviet Union to seek the kind of financial, commercial and cultural influence that greatly contributed to the successes of British imperialism. At the same time, fear of the political consequences of defeat on the field of battle, reinforced by the desire to avoid nuclear war with the United States, keeps the Soviet Union from resorting to military force in the brash manner of twentieth-century Germany and Japan. The Soviet regime has had to develop a special kind of imperialism, adapted to its own strengths. These, in the ultimate reckoning, are political in nature and consist in *the unique ability of communist regimes to impose tight control over their own domain while destabilizing the enemy's*. Given these realities, it is understandable that communist leaders should rely most heavily on political means (which, in their thinking, include military power used for purposes of intimidation) and prefer to commit to military operations by proxy forces rather than their own. This kind of imperialism calls for a protracted, patient and prudent but unremitting *war of political attrition*. Its purpose is to undermine the authority of hostile governments and the will of their citizens to resist, while maintaining their own base solid, impregnable, and in a permanent state of mobilization.

Political attrition can be accomplished in a variety of ways: by exploiting the " contradictions " in the enemy's camp; by playing on his fears, especially those of nuclear destruction; by redefining the political vocabulary and bending the rules of international conduct to one's own advantage; by isolating enemy countries from one another and from their sources of raw materials. It is the sum of these diverse measures that constitutes Soviet Grand Strategy.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The term *politics* is used in communist societies in a sense very different from that common in democracies. In the West, politics means civic activity—that is, the practice of administration or, more broadly, the art of governing. Communist theoreticians, however, have militarized politics and view it exclusively as a form of class warfare. This is how the subject is taught in Soviet school textbooks:

> In working out the strategic [or political] line of the Party under conditions of capitalism it is important, first of all, to define the *principal aim* of the working class at this stage and the *principal class enemy*, against whom it is essential at this point to concentrate class hatred and the striking force of all the workers in order to break his resistance.[1]

Noteworthy in this passage is the assumption that the objective of politics is " to break the resistance " of the opponent; this is essentially a military concept, and as such, it differs fundamentally from the view of politics prevalent in the West since the days of Aristotle, which sees its essence not in destruction but in cooperation.

IS it possible for a country with so many divergent interests, in a world so full of the unexpected, to conduct the kind of purposeful, long-term foreign policy that the concept Grand Strategy implies? Many deny this possibility. Men of the world, including practising politicians, for whom history is a succession of emergencies to be disposed of as they come up, reject the whole notion as unworthy of serious consideration. To them, the foreign policy of the Soviet Union qualitatively in no way differs from that of any other great power—whatever its declared objectives, Moscow pursues its national interest. The latter is defined to consist, first and foremost, in ensuring the country's physical security, and secondly, in seizing advantage of such opportunities as the course of events offers to enhance its power and influence. In short, foreign policy is everywhere and at all times the same, even if some allowance must be made for local peculiarities, which in the case of the USSR are a non-Western past and the revolutionary background of its ruling class. Soviet talk of the "strategic line," of "breaking the enemy's will," of the "final victory of socialism " is treated by these people as rhetorical drivel, the communist equivalent of democratic campaign oratory. Soviet foreign affairs specialists assiduously encourage this " pragmatic " outlook in their Western counterparts.

The trouble with this pragmatic approach, which prevails in the foreign policy establishments of all the Western countries, is that every attempt made since 1917 to treat the Soviet Union as another great power concerned exclusively with safeguarding its national security and increasing its international influence has ended in failure. One need only recall the Yalta accords. At Yalta, the United States went out of its way to

[1] O. V. Kuusinen, et al. *Osnovy Marksizma-Leninizma: Uchebnoe posobie* [The Fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism: A Textbook], 2nd ed. (Moscow, 1962), p. 360.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

satisfy what President Roosevelt considered Russia's legitimate national interests. Eastern Europe was acknowledged as a Soviet sphere of influence. To ensure its entrance in the war against Japan—which probably nothing short of a United States threat to use atomic bombs could have prevented in any event—the Soviet Union was awarded territories belonging to China and Japan. The Ukraine and Belorussia, constituent units of the USSR, received double representation in the United Nations General Assembly. None of these extravagant concessions brought about the desired results; their immediate outcome was unprecedented Soviet expansion and the cold war. State Department specialists on the Soviet Union, confronted with the breakdown of the Yalta accords and the ruin of their assumptions about that country, consoled themselves for a while with the fantastic notion that perhaps Stalin had come under attack from his colleagues in the Politburo for having conceded too much to the Allies.[2] This experience, however, has taught the " pragmatists " nothing. A quarter of a century later, President Nixon decided to base *détente* on the very same principle that had served President Roosevelt so badly at Yalta. Early in his administration he informed his associates that United States–Soviet relations were to rest on mutual respect of the parties' " vital interests."[3] Disappointments with *détente* notwithstanding, the theme resounded again in the speeches of President Carter, who asked the Soviet Union rhetorically whether it was prepared to " promote a more stable international environment in which its own legitimate, peaceful concerns can be pursued."[4] The point, of course, is that the *nomenklatura* is concerned not with national interests but only its own, which are profoundly anti-national, and that it does not even accept the notion of " legitimate " concerns in a " stable international order," in as much as it regards this whole order as thoroughly illegitimate and meriting overthrow. To be sure, the *nomenklatura* is pragmatic, but its pragmatism happens to require a strong commitment to what Western " pragmatists " dismiss as ideology.

PROPERLY to understand grand strategy one must not make it into a straw man. This concept has nothing in common with global " master plans " or " timetables." No country has ever produced anything of the sort: even Hitler, who had a clear view how and in what stages he would secure control over Europe, had to adapt himself to unexpected events that sometimes promoted his plans (e.g., Chamberlain's surrender at Munich and Stalin's offer of a non-aggression pact) and sometimes disrupted them (e.g. his defeat in the Battle of Britain and Mussolini's unsuccessful invasion of Greece). There is no contradiction, whether in warfare or in politics, between the pursuit of strategic objectives and the exploitation of tactical opportunities; the one subsumes the other.

[2] Edward R. Stettinius, *Roosevelt and the Russians: The Yalta Conference* (New York, 1949), p. 309.
[3] Letter to Secretary of State Rogers, cited in Henry A. Kissinger, *White House Years* (Boston, 1979), p. 135.
[4] State of the Union Address, in *The New York Times*, 24 Jan. 1980, p. 12.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Strategy is not getting what one wants but knowing what one wants and what it takes to get it. No great imperial power has ever come into existence either by mindless seizure of every opportunity that came its way or by a single-minded advance towards the ultimate objective without regard to opportunities. The dichotomy between grand strategy and opportunism is, therefore, a false one.

The growth of the British Empire demonstrates this contention. John Seeley coined the celebrated phrase that Britain had " conquered and peopled half the world in a fit of absence of mind." On closer inspection, however, the manner in which Britain had accomplished this task turns out to have been much less haphazard. It is true that British archives have yielded no documents with comprehensive schemes of imperial strategy. Nevertheless, in the words of an authoritative study of the subject, while " subjectively and consciously [English statesmen] may have had no permanent policy for the advancement of the State, but only a number of expedients, temporary and shifting: yet, objectively and in practical effect, a policy [was] there."[5] This claim can be corroborated by a glance at the historical atlas. It surely was no accident that Britain concentrated its colonial acquisitions in two regions of the world, namely North America and the lands bordering on the Indian Ocean. Nor could it have been fortuitous that Britain seized almost all of East Africa but largely ignored Africa's Atlantic coast; that it took Gibraltar from Spain but returned to it the Balearic Islands; that it inspired the United States to proclaim the Monroe Doctrine which opened up Latin America to its commerce without requiring it to establish costly political and military control over the region.

Recent scholarship has shown that at the time it entered the First World War, Imperial Germany had developed a grand scheme of reconstructing Europe after victory, which, had it won, would have given it hegemony over the Continent and made it a true global power.

The record of Imperial Russia indicates that it too undertook major expansionist moves in the context of long-term political objectives. Its assault early in the eighteenth century on Sweden's Baltic possessions and its interventions in the second half of that century in Poland, which led to that country's destruction, were inspired by conscious geopolitical considerations. They were not mere seizures of opportunities but also creations of opportunities for the purpose of advancing the government's principal foreign policy objective, which at the time was the introduction of Russia as a permanent member into the European community. Later, Russia's expansion into China, which in 1904 led to a war with Japan, was undertaken in fulfilment of strategic plans for the political and economic domination of the Far East worked out by the Minister of Finance, Sergei Witte.

Now, if such planning on a global scale held true of conventional imperial powers, how much more must it be true of a regime that by its

[5] *The Cambridge History of the British Empire*, I (Cambridge, 1929), p. 207. The passage refers to the origins of British imperial policy in the seventeenth century.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

very nature thinks globally and approaches politics in a " scientific " manner. Soviet sources since 1917, especially from the early years when Soviet leaders, confident of imminent victory, spoke of their plans frankly and openly, provide ample evidence to this effect. The minutes of congresses of the Party and the Communist International, as well as internal communications from the immediate post-revolutionary years, are filled with discussions of Grand Strategic plans in which the globe is treated as if it were a giant chessboard. The following are two examples drawn from a large body of evidence.

IN 1920 the Communist International held its Second Congress, at which the strategy for the worldwide revolutionary struggle was formulated. One of its resolutions called for expanding the struggle against the " bourgeoisie " in geographic breadth in order to compel the class enemy to dissipate his forces:

> In the period of the Communist Revolution, the Communist Party in its essence turns into a party of the offensive, of pressure on capitalist society. . . . It is obligated to do everything in order directly to lead the working masses in this offensive, everywhere where the conditions for it are ripe . . . These conditions consist, first and foremost, in *exacerbating the struggle in the camp of the bourgeoisie itself on the national and international scale.* When the struggle in the camp of the bourgeoisie assumes dimensions which open perspectives that the working class will deal with enemy forces in a condition of dispersal, then the party must take into its hands the initiative, so that, after careful political and, insofar as feasible, organizational preparation, it can lead the masses into combat. . . .
>
> The experience of the revolution indicates that the broader the field of combat, the greater the hope for victory.[6]

We find a similar habit of global strategic thinking in Trotsky's analysis of the world situation outlined in his letter to the Central Committee of August 1919:

> There is no doubt at all that our Red Army constitutes an incomparably more powerful force in the Asian terrain of world politics than in the European terrain. Here there opens up before us an undoubted possibility . . . of conducting activity in the Asian field. The road to India may prove at the given moment to be more readily passable and shorter for us than the road to Soviet Hungary. The sort of army, which at the moment can be of no great significance in the European scales, can upset the unstable balance of Asian relationships, of colonial dependence, give a direct push to an uprising on the part of the oppressed masses and assure the triumph of such a rising in Asia. . . .
>
> One authoritative military official already some months ago put up a plan for creating a cavalry corps (30,000–40,000 riders) with the idea of launching it against India.
>
> It stands to reason that a plan of this sort requires careful

[6] V. I. Lenin, *Sochineniya* [*Works*], 3rd ed. (Moscow-Leningrad, 1935), vol. XXVI, pp. 604, 605.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> preparation, both material and political. We have up to now devoted too little attention to agitation in Asia. However, the international situation is evidently shaping in such a way that the road to Paris and London lies via the towns of Afghanistan, the Punjab and Bengal . . .[7]

Trotsky's analysis has reached us by accident; the resolutions of the contemporary equivalents of the dissolved Communist International are much less explicit. Even so, there is no shortage of material to show that the present-day Soviet leadership thinks and plans much as its predecessors had done.

The Soviet penetration into the Middle East, which began in 1954–55 with the signing of military accords between the communist bloc and Cairo, is commonly depicted as a defensive move in reaction to the Baghdad Pact with which John Foster Dulles had attempted to bar the Soviet Union from penetrating the Middle East. In the interpretation of the " pragmatic " school of thought, this was a Soviet reaction to an American initiative and, as such, perfectly consonant with conventional great power politics. But we happen to have it on good authority that the Egyptian accords had for the Soviet Union broader and more aggressive ramifications—that they were, in fact, a strategic move whose target was not the Middle East but Western Europe. Here is what Andrei Sakharov remembers from the days when he was still a trusted member of the Soviet establishment:

> I often recall a talk given in 1955 by a high official of the USSR Council of Ministers to a group of scientists assembled at the Kremlin. He said that at that time . . . the principles of the new Soviet policy in the Middle East were being discussed in the Presidium. And he observed that the long-range goal of that policy, as it had been formulated, was to exploit Arab nationalism in order to create difficulties for the European countries in obtaining crude oil, and thereby to gain influence over them.[8]

To think of oil as an instrument of political leverage and of the Middle East as a back door to Europe is the very essence of grand strategy.

IN open Soviet publications, many of which are translated into English for the benefit of radical intellectuals in the Third World, Soviet Grand Strategy is outlined in thinly veiled language. Thus, in 1973 appeared a book, edited by V. V. Zagladin, whose very title would evoke condescending smiles in NATO's foreign offices were it written by a Western author—*The World Communist Movement: Outline of Strategy and Tactics.* The book contains theoretical directives from the Soviet Central Committee to communist parties in " capitalist " countries. In it appears the following passage:

> The present stage of the revolutionary movement in the capitalist countries cannot as yet be regarded as a period of revolutionary assaults against the citadels of capitalism. It is primarily a period in

[7] Jan H. Meijer (ed.), *The Trotsky Papers, 1917–1922*, I (London, 1964), pp. 623–25.
[8] Andrei V. Sakharov, *My Country and the World* (New York, 1975), p. 81.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> which the way is paved for the socialist revolution, and the political army of revolution is formed. The workers' revolutionary movement in these countries is developing and acquiring political maturity. Even in the conditions of the so-called " calm " development of capitalism, the working class, by extending anti-monopoly action, is ever more undermining the foundations of capitalism from within. The leading role of the working class and its revolutionary vanguard in the broad anti-monopoly movement of the people . . . is enhancing the revolutionary consciousness of the masses. Thus, the material and socio-political conditions are ever more maturing for a revolutionary replacement of capitalism by a new social system. . . .[9]

To understand the above message, the reader only has to decipher a few code words, substituting for " workers' revolutionary movement " and " revolutionary vanguard " communist parties. Thus decoded, the statement says that as of 1973 (when it was made), the time was not yet ripe for a direct assault on Western democratic societies (" citadels of capitalism ") but was better employed for organizing one's forces for a future assault. As explained in another part of the book, the " broad anti-monopoly movement of the people " meant exerting pressures on capitalist systems to nationalize private enterprises and bring workers (read: communist trade-union leaders) into corporate management. Once such changes in the capitalist economy have been carried out, the result will be clashes " between the working people and the state . . . in the course of which the question of the nature of state power is bound to arise sooner or later." The end result will be a " revolutionary replacement of capitalism " by socialism.[10] In plain language, a Soviet political theorist exhorts communists in Western countries to work for the expropriation in their countries of private property and the transfer of corporate management to communist trade-union leaders as a means of securing a base from which, at the appropriate time, to launch an assault on the " capitalist " state.

These passages have been cited to illustrate a mode of thinking characteristic of the revolutionary mind, whether the revolutionary in question is in the underground, battling to seize power, or sits comfortably ensconced by his multi-buttoned phone in the Central Committee's headquarters on Moscow's Staraya Ploshchad', planning the " class struggle " on the international scale. It takes for granted the inevitability of unremitting global social conflicts until ultimate victory; it sets the schedule of action in the context of a sober assessment of the correlation of forces; it subordinates everything to political objectives.

This manner of thinking is quite alien to Western societies, especially to the diplomats, lawyers, businessmen and professional politicians who set the tone of East-West relations. These people are unprepared by either education or experience to believe that there is anything in the world worth doing or possessing that does not lend itself to "deals."

[9] Published in Moscow, 1973; the citation is from p. 101.
[10] Ibid. p. 99.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Confronted with " non-negotiable " demands, they take them to be negotiating ploys. Whenever they do succeed in striking a bargain on some particular issue with a power like the Soviet Union (or Nazi Germany, for that matter) that has the reputation of being engaged in an uncompromising pursuit of grand strategy, they feel not only pleased but vindicated. It never occurs to them that for the other party the deal is not an end to the dispute but one move in a larger game, and that this or that concession that they may have succeeded in extracting from it will be lost once the stakes are raised further, as they invariably are.

Soviet Political Strategy

As previously mentioned, the logic of the situation—its particular blend of strengths and weaknesses—compels the Soviet Union to rely heavily in its grand strategy on political means. Political strategy, in turn, means first and foremost promoting and exploiting divisions in the enemy camp: driving wedges between citizens of democratic societies and their elected officials, aggravating relations among social classes as well as ethnic and religious groups, and sowing discord among allies. This classic *divide et impera* policy, which forms the essence of Soviet political strategy, was formulated as early as the 1920 Congress of the Communist International as " exacerbating the struggle in the camp of the bourgeoisie itself on the national and international scale."[11] Lenin often stressed the supreme importance of this technique. In a tract written in 1920 against the advocates of a " direct " assault on capitalism, he expressed his views in a particularly blunt manner:

> [The] entire history of Bolshevism, both before and after the October Revolution, is *full* of instances of changes of tack, conciliatory tactics and compromises with other parties, including bourgeois parties!
>
> To carry on a war for the overthrow of the international bourgeoisie . . . and to renounce in advance any change of tack, or any utilization of a conflict of interests (even if temporary) among one's enemies, or any conciliation or compromise with possible allies . . . is that not ridiculous in the extreme? . . .
>
> After the first socialist revolution of the proletariat, and the overthrow of the bourgeoisie in some country, the proletariat of that country remains *for a long time weaker* than the [international] bourgeoisie . . . The more powerful enemy can be vanquished only by exerting the utmost effort, and by the most thorough, careful, attentive, skilful and *obligatory* use of any, even the smallest, rift between the enemies, any conflict of interests among the bourgeoisie of the various countries . . . and also by taking advantage of any, even the smallest, opportunity of winning a mass ally, even though this ally is temporary, vacillating, unstable, unreliable, and conditional . . .[12]

This strategy is designed to exploit clashes of opinion and of interest,

[11] Above, p. 6.

[12] " *Left-Wing* " *Communism, an Infantile Disorder*, in *Collected Works* (Moscow, 1966), vol. XXXI, pp. 70–71.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which are the essence of democracy, to the advantage of a regime that tolerates neither—in other words, to turn constructive competition into self-destruction. That this technique must be employed by any power bent on conquering a Western country was noted with remarkable prescience a century and a half ago by the father of modern strategic doctrine, Karl von Clausewitz—" It is impossible," he wrote, " to obtain possession of a great country with European civilization otherwise than by aid of internal division."[13]

The *divide et impera* policy strives to sow discord among the allies as well as within each allied country by inflaming antagonisms and arousing mutual suspicions, using for this purpose political, military and economic inducements or punishments, as the situation requires. The following are some examples of this tactic as applied by the Soviet Union towards NATO countries:

—In signing business contracts for projects in the USSR and Eastern Europe, preference is given to countries which pursue an accommodating policy towards Moscow and are prepared to " de-couple " commercial relations from political ones; countries which are deemed unfriendly or (because of their resort to sanctions and embargoes) " unreliable " are penalized. Such contracts encourage political accommodation, but they also create a dependence of the countries concerned on the communist client. In Germany alone, some 300,000 jobs are said to be directly or indirectly linked to business with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Since many of these jobs are in so-called " sunset," or declining industries, liable to go under without the benefit of sales to communist countries, aggravating unemployment, an economic dependence is created that no German government, regardless of its political preferences, can ignore.

—The Soviet Union has persuaded much of the United States business community that if Washington conducted a more " friendly " policy—that is, reconciled itself to its aggressive actions—they would receive lush export orders. The lure of these orders has transformed United States business leaders into the most vociferous neutralist lobby in the country.

—In countries with powerful communist trade unions, such as Italy and France, the Soviet Union takes advantage of their presence to threaten industrial unrest to firms that hesitate to enter with it into commercial agreements.

—The Soviet Union has for years exploited the yearning of West Germans for personal contacts with their families in East Germany to extract from Bonn an accommodating stance; it has used, to the same end, West Germany's desire for the eventual unification of its divided nation.

—France's fear of the supremacy of the " Anglo-Saxons " as well as of

[13] *The Campaign of 1812 in Russia* (London, 1843), p. 184.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Germans on the Continent is played upon to incite Paris to conduct an " independent " foreign policy.

—The Soviet Union interferes in democratic elections abroad by bestowing its blessing on candidates whose stand on international issues happens to suit its interests. They and their parties are depicted as forces for " peace," whose election will lead to the improvement of relations with Moscow and lower the risk of war (e.g. Richard Nixon in 1972; Giscard d'Estaing in 1973 and 1981; and the German Social Democratic Party in 1983).

—The USSR pressures the West to enter with it into " mutual security " accords, the most comprehensive of which was signed in Helsinki in 1975; these create the illusion that it shares with the United States responsibility for safeguarding the peace and integrity of the Continent as a whole, thereby undermining NATO and pushing Western Europe towards neutralism.

—Moscow increases or diminishes the flow of Jewish *émigrés* in accord with the status of overall United States–Soviet Union relations as a device for pressuring the American Jewish community to influence its government towards accommodation.

—The USSR offers support to terrorists of every political hue, right-wing as well as left-wing, sometimes both concurrently, in order to destroy in foreign countries the basis of law and order and thus either make them vulnerable to a communist power seizure or else drive them into the arms of a right-wing dictatorship, which enables native communists to assume leadership of the " united democratic front "; this practice by the Soviet client Bulgaria caused civil unrest to break out in Turkey a few years ago and nearly resulted in that country's political collapse.

Such instances of the application of the principle of *divide et impera* can be multiplied without difficulty from the experience of Europe and other regions; they implement Lenin's call for exploiting the " rifts " in the enemy camp. It is a devastating strategy when applied against democracies, because democracies cannot remain true to themselves unless they tolerate dissent among their citizens and disagreements within their alliances. Such dissent and such disagreements, however, offer Moscow infinite opportunities to interfere in their affairs by throwing its not inconsiderable weight to support now this, now that contending party. Confronted with another totalitarian state, such as Nazi Germany or Communist China, the Soviet leadership, unable to resort to this strategy, finds itself severely handicapped—prevented by the hostile regime's tight grip on its population from reaching over its head to the diverse social and political groups, it tends towards accommodation. Thus, after signing the non-aggression pact with Hitler in 1939, Stalin scrupulously refrained from interfering in internal German affairs. When in January 1940 Mussolini berated his ally for being too friendly with Moscow, Hitler responded that a basis had been created for an " acceptable " relationship with the USSR—" We no longer have cause [to complain] that any

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Russian department attempts to exert influence in internal German affairs."*[14] It goes without saying that the vulnerability of democratic societies to internal interference causes Moscow to favour the broadest kind of democracy for countries that it has an interest in weakening, in accord with the adage, " When I am the weaker, I demand from you liberty, because this is your principle; when I am the stronger, I deprive you of it, because this is my principle."

SO much for political tactics. Above them stands the " general line " that determines the application of Grand Strategy to given historic circumstances. In Lenin's day, the general line focused on two targets: in the industrial countries, aggravating social strife and the competition for markets; in the colonial areas, inciting movements for national independence. This approach largely lost its utility after the Second World War. The extraordinary economic progress of Western societies under " Pax Americana " and the movements of social reform that accompanied it have in all Western countries reduced class consciousness as well as social strife. The modern Western working class can by no stretch of the imagination be treated as *proletariat* in the classic Marxist sense. This concept, which derives from the Latin *proles* (" offspring," defining a class in ancient Rome whose whole wealth consisted of children), lost meaning in the advanced industrial countries as labour merged into the lower-middle class. Surveys conducted since the Second World War indicate that only a small minority of German workers think of themselves as workers, and many of them do not even know what the word *proletarian* means. In addition, everywhere in the industrial countries the proportion of manually occupied employees steadily declines as white-collar and service employees take the place of blue-collar workers. Any communist political strategist worth his salt would have to conclude that the objective trends of modern economies point towards an irreversible decline of labour as an isolated and aggrieved class and, consequently, that a strategy based on the exploitation of differences between the haves and have-nots in advanced industrial countries offers little scope. The same holds true of expectation of conflicts among " capitalist " countries for markets and sources of raw materials. In the 1920s Trotsky could still fantasize that economic rivalries will lead the United States and Great Britain to war. But nothing of the kind has ever occurred or even came close to occurring. The emergence after the war of multinational corporations has further smoothed competition among states over markets and resources. Those

* The Soviet government, indeed, showed a tolerance towards Nazism that it has never displayed towards the democracies. In a speech which he delivered on 31 October 1939, in the midst of furious attacks on England and France for waging war on Hitler, V. M. Molotov, Soviet Commissar of Foreign Affairs, declared preference for National Socialism to be a question of taste: " The ideology of Hitlerism, as any ideological system, can be accepted or rejected: this is a matter of political opinion " (*Pravda*, 1 Nov. 1939, p. 1).

[14] Hans-Adolf Jacobsen, *Der Zweite Weltkrieg* [The Second World War] (Frankfurt a/M, 1965), p. 57, p. 59.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

economic differences that continue to divide democratic societies—as, for instance, over tariffs or subsidies—are resolved peacefully through high-level negotiation; they hardly lend themselves to political exploitation by Moscow.

The old general line is no more appropriate to conditions in the post-war Third World. Since 1945, all the non-communist colonies have been emancipated, making agitation for " national liberation " irrelevant. Here and there it is still possible to stoke the fires of anti-Westernism (e.g. among the Palestinians and in Namibia) but these areas offer limited opportunity. Here too, therefore, new strategies had to be devised. We will now turn to the central theme of the current Soviet general line towards the West, which revolves around the related subjects of " peace " and " the bomb."

THE slogan of peace has served the communists well in the past. In 1971, their readiness to come out for an immediate and unconditional end to the war (they were the only party in Russia to adopt this policy) contributed substantially to their ability to take power. The call for peace enabled them to transform Russian armies into mutinous mobs and to gain majorities in the soviets of the principal cities filled with fresh recruits. Although today the peace slogan does not have the same relevance that it had in Russia of 1917, since the world is at least formally at peace, in some respects it reverberates in the human consciousness even more powerfully than in the past, because of the appearance of nuclear weapons, which not only threaten unprecedented casualties but are believed by many to place at risk the very survival of the human race.

In its most rudimentary sense, *peace* means the absence of hostilities. Such a negative definition, however, is not very meaningful; by its criterion, an efficient prison or a regime of military occupation creates conditions of peace, whereas, in reality, both merely institutionalize violence. The preferred usage is positive in emphasis, defining peace not as the absence of hostilities but as the existence of accord. Its distinguishing feature is law, which provides a mechanism for resolving disputes on the basis of objective principles, acknowledged as binding on them by the parties involved. Formal " peace," imposed by the application or the threat of force, produces at best a truce; its rationale is the realization by the weaker party that resistance is futile. It is thus by its very nature precarious, being liable to be upset whenever the imbalance of forces that has made it possible in the first place is rectified. The true antithesis of war, therefore, is not the absence of overt hostilities, or war in the dictionary sense, but the rule of law.

This is not, of course, how the *nomenklatura* defines and exploits this concept, so charged with emotion. Its definition is the most formalistic imaginable: peace means nothing more nor less than a condition in which sovereign states do not shoot at each other. Any other manifestation of hostility is said to be quite compatible with peace—" ideological warfare," for example, which incites to hatred; or " class war," which pits one

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

social group against another; or " wars of national liberation," which encourage racial conflict in the Third World. Such a definition is well calculated to serve Soviet interests, which are to avoid general war with the " imperialist camp " while inciting and exacerbating every possible conflict within it. A Russian joke has it that Moscow will never start a war but that it will wage peace so vigorously that not one stone shall be left upon another.

THE Soviet government exploits the peace theme in a variety of ways. Of these, two deserve particular attention: defining peace to mean acquiescence to Soviet demands; and creating a false sense of identity between East and West by making weapons rather than the people behind the weapons appear the main threat to peace. Moscow dominates the international discussion about nuclear weapons, because it is able to counter the babble of contentious and emotional Western voices with a single, steadfast voice of its own. The commissioning of its nuclear weapons is surrounded with such a thick veil of secrecy that even high Soviet officials are kept in the dark. This contrasts with comprehensive debates in Congress and the media in the United States about appropriateness for every proposed new nuclear system and, in Western Europe, about their deployment. While in the West strategies for waging nuclear war are discussed openly in bloodcurdling detail—" limited nuclear war," civilian versus military targeting, weapons that destroy people but spare inanimate objects, and so on—in the Soviet Union these matters are left exclusively to the discretion of a small body of military experts. As a result of the imposition of near-total secrecy on its own nuclear deployments and strategies, Moscow is able to create the impression that it does not even consider such matters and builds weapons solely to protect itself from " nuclear maniacs."

It is in the interest of the Soviet Union to depict the nuclear weapon, however employed, as capable of destroying life on earth—regardless of whether this is objectively true or not. In order to keep this threat clearly in front of the Western public, it insists that not only can there be no limited use of nuclear weapons, as postulated by NATO's theory of " flexible response," but that any resort to these weapons will inevitably unleash a nuclear holocaust. This is not a strategic doctrine, since Soviet nuclear deployments clearly indicate that Moscow entertains a variety of its own " flexible responses "; it is, rather, a psychological device, a means of behavioural manipulation. It helps to establish the principle which is at the heart of the current Soviet political strategy towards the West, that good relations with the Soviet Union must become the supreme objective of Western policy. This principle is conveyed by a series of half-truths linked by a pseudo logic, the appeal of which is not to the mind but to the heart. It is designed to translate the natural dread that most people have of war in general and nuclear war in particular into an overwhelming anxiety that paralyses thought and will. The chain of casuistic reasoning runs approximately as follows: (1) nuclear war would

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

destroy life on earth; (2) since life is the highest good, anything is preferable to nuclear war; (3) nuclear war can be avoided only if the interests of the Soviet Union and its bloc are respected; (4) the interests of the Soviet Union and its bloc are determined by the Soviet government; (5) any challenge to the wishes of the Soviet government, therefore, threatens nuclear war and extinction of life on this planet. From this sequence of reasoning, whose connections are anything but logical, it follows that every Soviet action, no matter how aggressive and immoral, need not be condoned but must be acquiesced to for the sake of the supreme objective, preservation of good relations with the Soviet Union, which alone makes it possible to preserve peace, which in turn ensures the survival of mankind.

The Soviet Union has achieved remarkable success with this specious argument. One can often hear Western intellectuals and politicians echo it with a conviction worthy of a better cause. Thus, Congressman Jonathan Bingham of New York has expressed the following sentiment:

> *Above all*, we must remember that the Soviet Union remains the world's only other superpower—the only country in the world capable of destroying us. Maintaining good relations with the Soviet Union must be our *paramount* objective.[15]

On the face of it, the statement appears unexceptionally trite. But what is it really saying? That objectives of life other than physicial survival, objectives which enabled our ancestors to bequeath to us the benefits of their civilization—among them, personal freedom, the rule of law, and human rights—must in our age take second place to " good relations with the Soviet Union "? That should other powers also acquire the capacity to destroy us, " good relations " with them will also have to become our " paramount objective "? That we must give the Soviet government carte blanche to perpetrate inside its country and abroad any barbarity as long as it refrains from firing nuclear weapons at us? It is doubtful that Congressman Bingham had thought through the implications of his words, they seemed such a reassuring string of clichés, but whether he knew it or not, he had adopted the Soviet definition of peace.

ANOTHER example of this mentality, in some respects even more appalling, comes from Carl-Friedrich von Weizsäcker, the current President of West Germany. The author is a distinguished scientist who has close connections with the leadership of the German Social-Democratic Party. He felt no compunction in saying, in what appears to be oblique criticism of President Reagan:

> A policy which divides the world into the good and the evil, and which views the greatest power alongside which it is our destiny to live as the centre of evil is not a policy of peace *even if its moral judgments are correct*.[16]

[15] With Victor C. Johnson, *Foreign Affairs*, Spring, 1979, p. 919. Emphasis added.

[16] " Abschreckung-nur eine Atempause? " |" Deterrence: Only a Breathing Space? "|, *Die Zeit*, No. 13 (26 March, 1982), p. 19. Emphasis added.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

What Mr Weizsäcker seems to be saying is that in relations with a nuclear power of the first magnitude, moral judgments have to be suspended or at least not voiced. Morality itself is subordinated to the cause of " peace," in the sense of getting along with " the greatest power "—that is, the Soviet Union. Inconsistently, Mr Weizsäcker does not condemn Soviet leaders for abusing the United States in incomparably more offensive terms; for some reason he does not consider abusive pronouncements when they emanate from Moscow as a disservice to the cause of peace. Such are the inconsistencies and immoralities one is driven into when one adopts the principle that survival is the supreme goal of individuals and nations.

Once the principle has been established that irritating or standing up to the Soviet Union must be avoided at all costs, no matter how grave the provocation, an important psychological battle has been lost. In this atmosphere, the Soviet Union is able to set the rules for the conduct of international relations in a manner that gives it licence to perpetrate any outrage short of launching nuclear weapons without having to worry about reactions other than opprobrium; and, if Herr von Weizsäcker has his way, even opprobrium will be silenced. Should this view prevail, the driving force behind the foreign policy of Western powers will no longer be the commitment to protect national interest or the values of Western civilization, but the naked terror of the caveman. Terror-driven fear, however, lends itself to political exploitation. The subject has not attracted much attention from scholars; among the few to have considered it is the Swiss writer Urs Schwarz. Mr Schwarz draws a useful distinction between fear proper (*Fürcht*), which he defines as a healthy response to an identifiable threat that produces a defensive reaction, and anxiety (*Angst*) which is a generalized condition of fear, focused on no particular threat, and, as such, liable to feed on itself and to paralyse the will. Referring to nuclear weapons, he says:

> That the danger in the technical sense is real and that the accumulated forces of destruction are monstrous, requires neither emphasis nor proof. One knows them and has every reason to be deeply concerned. But the attitude of the majority of the people towards these facts is not one of fear or of concern but of pronounced anxiety . . . It is precisely in this connection that the distinction between fear and anxiety assumes great significance . . . While fear . . . is an entirely desirable reaction to the threat of nuclear weapons, because it makes possible the reaction of deterrence and thereby prevents war, anxiety can produce the contrary effect.[17]

ANDREI Sakharov has warned the West of the dangers of accepting the Soviet " rules of the game " in international relations. But as with much else that concerns this wise and brave man, he is praised and his counsel ignored. Manipulation of the international rules of conduct to its exclusive benefit, against a general climate of nuclear terror, is one of

[17] *Die Angst in der Politik* [Anxiety in Politics] (Düsseldorf and Vienna, 1967), pp. 61–62.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the most effective and least noted tools of Soviet foreign policy. Of the rules skewed in favour of the communist bloc the following may serve as examples:

— The so-called Brezhnev Doctrine, which insists that any country that has crossed the line separating " feudalism " or " capitalism " from communism must under no conditions revert to its previous status, whereas all non-communist social and political systems are subject to change of ownership at all times. This principle of one-way change, tacitly accepted by the West, ensures that the East-West competition over spheres of influence takes place exclusively at the expense of the West or third parties.
— In any region where they come under attack from communist guerrillas, non-communist governments (e.g. in El Salvador) are subjected to international pressure to negotiate with their armed opponents; when the same situation arises in countries under communist control (e.g. Nicaragua, Afghanistan, Angola) such pressures are absent.
— The Soviet Union claims that its interests extend to every region of the globe—in the words of Andrei Gromyko, " today [1971] there is no question of any significance that can be decided without the Soviet Union or in opposition to it."[18] This claim allows Moscow to demand a voice in the solution of regional crises in any part of the world. At the same time, the Soviet Union denies other countries, the United States included, a comparable right; in high-level negotiation between the two countries, Soviet representatives insist that the agenda remain strictly confined to bilateral issues, which, in practice, means arms control.
— The Soviet Union claims the prerogative of engaging in unrestrained " ideological warfare " even under conditions of *détente*. This concept embraces hate campaigns against the United States, official pronouncements linking it with Nazi Germany, and predictions of the inevitable doom of the " capitalist " order. When, however, a Western statesman, such as President Reagan, refers to communism as a historic failure or the " focus of evil," outraged voices in the Soviet establishment and in the West complain of bellicosity and dangerous interference in the internal affairs of another " superpower."
— The Soviet Union demands and receives the right to present its views on international affairs in Western media; no comparable right is accorded to Western spokesmen in Soviet media.
— The Soviet Union is suffered to manufacture and deploy nuclear missiles with an unmistakable first-strike capability; when the United States commissions similar weapons, it is accused of " destabilizing " the nuclear balance and provoking war.

[18] XXIV S'ezd KPSS: *Stenograficheskii otchet* [24th Congress of the CPSU: Stenographic Record] (Moscow, 1971), 1, p. 482.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

This double standard cannot be defended on grounds of either logic or equity; it is nevertheless widely accepted and rationalized by left-of-centre opinion in Western countries. The Brezhnev Doctrine goes unchallenged in the name of " realism." It would be " unrealistic," the argument runs, to try to alter the map of Eastern Europe or to remove Castro, even though these communist regimes are admittedly unpopular and maintain themselves in power by the force of arms. (Oddly enough, the principle of realism is not invoked in regard to Israel's presence on the West Bank or South Africa's in Namibia.) Communist guerrillas are said to embody irresistible forces of social progress, whereas their anti-communist counterparts stand for reaction. The one-sided Soviet access to Western media is defended as proof of democracy's superiority.

SOVIET strategy has had much success in enforcing the principle that the West must present it with no proposal concerning East-West relations that Moscow has declared in advance to be unacceptable to it. As a consequence, East-West negotiations often take place within the Western camp, the contending parties arguing among themselves over the best terms that may reasonably be offered to Moscow. Proposals considered unacceptable to Moscow are rejected *a priori*, without a discussion of their intrinsic merits. An instance of such self-regulation occurred in the summer of 1983. During testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the new director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Kenneth Adelman, came under pressure to define what weapons the Russians would have to give up to make it possible to cancel the MX programme. Mr Adelman objected that this question could not be meaningfully answered; but as the questioners would not relent, he volunteered that a dismantling of the Soviet SS-17, SS-18 and SS-19 systems would allow the United States to dispense with its new ICBM system.

How seriously Mr Adelman meant this answer to be taken need not detain us. What matters is that the discussion that ensued centred not on the question whether the proposal was sensible and fair, but whether it would be acceptable to the Soviet Union. Senator Charles Mathias reacted at once negatively: he said that the administration " has made impossible demands " on Moscow. Deputy Secretary of State Kenneth Dam, testifying in Congress, expressed the opinion that " to talk about eliminating an entire weapons system would go far beyond anything . . . the Soviets are willing to talk about."[19] By contrast, when the United States government made it known that it found entirely unacceptable Soviet proposals for a " nuclear freeze," no clamour was raised on either side of the Atlantic for the Soviet Union to give it up on the grounds of its " unacceptability " to the United States. In this case, whatever discussion took place concentrated on the merits of the Soviet proposal.

[19] *Boston Globe*, 24 June 1983 and *The New York Times*, 23 June 1983.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE impressive successes of the Soviet strategy of political divisiveness are in good measure explicable by the cooperation that it receives from witting and witless elements in the West.

Moscow has few reliable followers in NATO countries. In most of them, communist parties enjoy little influence; in the few where they do dispose of a significant following, the local leaders often openly take issue with Soviet policies. Here and there, communists manage to penetrate and capture the leadership of trade unions, church organizations, and other public bodies; they establish or support institutes that turn out pseudo-academic publications supportive of Soviet interests; they muster temporary alliances of " progressives " to oppose United States involvement in some Central American country or to pressure the United States to adopt a more " flexible " response to a Soviet arms proposal. If, however, the Soviet Union had to rely exclusively on these elements to advance its political strategy, it would scarcely be able to achieve much.

Of incomparably greater value to it are individuals and groups that have sympathy neither for communism nor for the Soviet Union, but who, for reasons of their own, often unconnected with security considerations, find themselves supporting Soviet causes and abetting Soviet political strategy. They are the " useful idiots " whom Lenin had long ago taught his followers to exploit.

Democratic societies are oriented towards the satisfaction of private interests; the public sector exists for, and justifies itself by, its ability to create optimal conditions for the pursuit of such interests. Ideally, it should have no interests of its own; the democratic state is meant to be a service organization. Under any circumstances short of armed conflict, the democratic state finds its citizenry loath to sacrifice private interests to those of national security. This makes it possible for the most bizarre informal alliances to be formed between Western groups and Moscow. An American businessman who receives orders from the USSR but cannot fill them because he is unable to obtain an export licence looks upon Moscow as a friendly customer and upon Washington as a foe. An American politician who wants public money to fund " social " programmes (an activity not unconnected with the garnering of votes) finds himself at one with Moscow in opposing increased United States defence expenditures. Rivals of the party in office derive malicious satisfaction from its foreign policy failures, since these vindicate their opposition and bring the time nearer when they may come to power. As long as East-West competition remains at an acceptable—that is, non-violent—level, major private interests in the West find it to their advantage to stress alleged similarities between East and West and to minimize the Soviet threat. In so doing, they are, in effect, making common cause with Moscow.

Weapon manufacturers apart, it is difficult to think of a group in the West that has a vested interest in bad relations with the communist bloc. And the production of military hardware is neither a significant nor a particularly profitable sector of Western economies, notwithstanding the

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mythology that surrounds the subject. The list of the 400 wealthiest Americans, published annually by *Forbes* magazine, carries no names of arms manufacturers; it indicates that the road to riches leads by way of oil, real estate, computers or cosmetics, not national defence. The so-called *hard-line trend in United States foreign policy is almost exclusively* ideological in motivation: it brings little, if any, profit. It is in the " soft-line " end of the spectrum that one can identify a wide range of self-interest. This interest can assume various forms, material and other.

TO begin with the academic community. In the 1930s, university circles showed a great deal of sympathy for communism, but of this little remains. Western specialists on the Soviet Union in particular are, with few exceptions, highly critical of that country and regard sojourn there as hardship duty. Professional considerations, however, compel most of them to keep their opinions to themselves. A " sovietologist " feels that he must be able to travel to the USSR from time to time to consort with specialists there and to carry out research in libraries and archives. Since public criticism of the Soviet system or its actions may result in visa denials, the typical expert will not speak out on East-West relations other than in a most circumspect manner, balancing criticism of the one side with condemnation of the other. He will also strongly endorse cultural and scientific exchanges, even when these can be shown to be inequitable because he is eager to ensure for himself access to the countries in which he specializes.

In broader intellectual and academic circles an interesting ambivalence prevails in regard to this subject. Most Western writers, scholars and scientists look upon the Soviet regime and its clients with unconcealed distaste. They are disgusted with the suppression of freedom there and the persecution of their friends and colleagues. They readily sign letters and petitions protesting such uncivilized behaviour; some even go to the lengths of boycotting conferences held in communist countries. But there is always present, especially among self-styled social scientists frustrated in their amibition to gain the prestige accorded to genuine scientists, an undercurrent of resentment against their own societies for not treating them with the proper respect, and, related to it, envy of their counterparts in the East. Although they entertain no illusions about the price which the communist authorities exact, they begrudge the distinctions and privileges that faithful service to the *nomenklatura* brings with it, and of which they feel unjustly deprived. Such sentiments are quite common among Western academicians, although they are rarely expressed with the candour that the British historian A. J. P. Taylor displayed in his report on a visit to Hungary: " The treatment of [Hungarian] historians and other scholars fills me with envy," he confessed on his return—

> The Institute of Historical Research in Budapest has extensive quarters on Castle Hill and over 60 paid researchers on its staff. The comparable English Institute in London has modest quarters in the Senate House and no paid researchers. The Hungarian Academy has

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> a palace all to itself just across from the Parliament House: colonnaded entrance and marble staircase. The Academy also owns country cottages, on Lake Balaton and in the mountains, which members of the Academy can use for free during the summer. The British Academy occupies a few rooms in Burlington House and possesses no country cottages.

Professor Taylor cannot be ignorant that the colonnaded entrances, marble staircases, and country cottages that have aroused such envy in him must be paid for in directed research, censorship, and other forms of intellectual humiliation. Even so, he resents society for denying him the rewards he considers rightfully his; and he does so despite the evidence that he himself adduces that the Hungarian academics themselves do not seem aware " how well off they are," for it appears that during his visit most of them were out of the country on sabbaticals in England, the United States and Finland.[20]

Allowance must also be made for public groups and their patrons in the federal and state governments who draw on money raised through taxes (or paid for with deficits) to subsidize their programmes and pay their salaries. The powerful associations of teachers and health-care personnel, for example, have a vested interest in keeping the defence budget as small as possible, since that budget is in direct competition with their own for public funds. To keep defence budgets small, they minimize the Soviet threat, and represent the real danger to United States security as coming from inadequately financed social services. It helps to assess the quality of this argument by imagining how it would have sounded in the 1930s, when the Nazis were arming for war, had it been said of Poland, Britain or France that they were threatened not by the Wehrmacht, but by inadequately funded schools and hospitals. Self-serving and specious as this argument is, it has persuasive force, because it involves immense sums of money and affects the welfare of millions of voters.

THE most unabashed voice in the West favouring accommodation with the Soviet Union, however, belongs to the business community. On the face of it, pro-Soviet sympathies on the part of a group that the Soviet Union is committed to destroying may seem absurd, but it is a fact that only serves to emphasize the élitist character of the Soviet leadership and the affinities that élites feel for each other, notwithstanding ideological or national differences. The workers of all countries have never united as effectively as have their ruling élites, which constitute the only true international. In United States elections, as a rule, the most " liberal " candidates fare best in precincts with educated and affluent voters, whereas conservative ones draw their support from the poorer classes. This trend runs contrary to historical experience: conservatism has traditionally been the ideology of the privileged who have a vested interest in the status quo and oppose change. The Soviet *nomenklatura*, which is a rigidly conservative body, conforms to this pattern. Public-

[20] " Diary," *London Review of Books*, 17 Feb.–2 March, 1983, p. 21.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

opinion polls further indicate that in the United States, the desire for accommodation with the Soviet Union is strongest among the educated upper-income groups, and declines as one moves down the educational and social scale, yielding among the lower strata to belligerent anti-communism. It surely is astonishing that Soviet emissaries are received with open arms by the National Association of Manufacturers and the Chamber of Commerce, but dare not set foot in the headquarters of American trade-union organizations.*

This unnatural goodwill for the Soviet Union of those who stand to lose the most should it attain its ultimate objectives is most readily explained by commercial interests. The United States business community has always believed that the Soviet Union constitutes a vast potential market for its capital and goods. Its representatives beat a path to Lenin's Moscow as soon as the last shots of the civil war had died down, in search of profitable concessions and contracts.[21] Experience has never borne out these expectations. Because the Soviet government is chronically short of both capital and goods to sell in industrial countries, its hope for extensive trade with the West rests on receipt of loans, either issued or guaranteed by Western governments.

The United States government has not adopted the practice of European states in this respect; indeed, in the early 1970s it imposed stringent limits on the amount of credits the Import-Export Bank could extend to the Soviet Union. As a consequence, United States-Soviet trade has never come near the levels that its advocates in both countries had hoped for. In the 1970s, during the era of *détente*, the total non-agricultural trade between the two countries (imports and exports combined) hovered around one billion dollars a year. United States non-agricultural exports to the USSR between 1971 and 1981 averaged annually slightly over $500 million; even in the second half of the decade, when the USSR had begun to make large-scale agricultural purchases, exports barely reached $2 billion. Total United States imports from the USSR remained through this decade in the low hundreds of millions.[22] United States imports from the Soviet Union even before the Afghanistan embargoes (1979) were one half those from Trinidad and Tobago. In spite of this disappointing record, United States corporations continue to look toward significant expansion in trade with the USSR, once political relations are improved. Leading business executives stand in the fore-

* The first (and, so far, last) occasion when a Soviet dignitary met with US labour leaders occurred in January 1959, when Deputy Prime Minister Anastas Mikoyan paid a visit to the AFL-CIO. In the spirit of bourgeois goodwill, *The New York Times* (7 Jan. 1959) reported that " although some embarrassing questions [were] raised there had been no heated exchanges," conveying the impression that the guest and hosts parted amicably. In reality, as is known from an eyewitness (John Herling in the *New Leader*, 2 Feb. 1959, 3–6), the encounter turned highly acrimonious as US labour leaders pressed Mikoyan about Soviet policies and practices. After heated exchanges, Mikoyan said: " The American trade-union leaders were more antagonistic to the Soviet Union than were the American capitalists whom I have met." This has always been the case.

[21] On the relations of US businessmen with the Soviet government, see Joseph Finder, *Red Carpet* (New York, 1983).

[22] US Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, *USSR: Review of Agriculture in 1981 and Outlook for 1982* (Washington, DC, May, 1982), p. 13.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

front of organizations dedicated to promoting better relations between the two countries; they vigorously oppose punitive sanctions and embargoes; and they are the most vociferous champions of arms control and summit meetings. The *nomenklatura*, which realizes these facts very well, courts the business community with great zeal, not only because it hopes to reap economic benefits from this quarter, but also and above all because it regards " capitalist " businessmen as their most effective lever in Washington. In Western Europe, whose commercial relations with Moscow are much more extensive, the business and banking communities play a critical role in promoting the spirit of *détente* and pressuring for NATO's de-coupling of commercial dealings from political relations with the Soviet bloc.

STILL, the number of business enterprises actually or even potentially involved in United States–Soviet trade is too small and their turnover too low to explain the commitment of the United States business élite to friendly relations with the Soviet Union regardless of the outrages which that country perpetrates or its hostile actions against the United States. The deeper causes for this phenomenon must be sought in social and cultural factors.

The modern corporate officer bears little resemblance to the classic bourgeois entrepreneur; he lacks the latter's spirit of individualism, his belief in himself and in his contribution to society, and his ethical values. He is a bureaucrat to whom stands open the path to potentially unlimited rewards, but whose personal status, as that of any salaried employee, is insecure. The corporation is his world; there is little connection between his personal morals and his work ethic. In these respects he has a great deal of affinity with a functionary of the *nomenklatura* with the difference that while he strives for higher profits, his Soviet counterpart strives for higher productivity. An American business executive instinctively understands a Soviet industrial manager, for, like him, he wants above all to get things done; like him, he views workers' demands as an impediment to higher production and profits, and intellectuals who talk of human rights as impractical dreamers. Today, the classic bourgeois can be found mainly in the younger branches of the economy, where risk-taking and private ownership continue to predominate. This type of businessman tends to be conservative in his politics. Executives of large, established and public corporations incline towards unideological pragmatism.

The other factor, even more imponderable, is snobbery. In the drawing rooms of New York's East Side, Georgetown, Cambridge or Beverly Hills, one is unlikely to meet with pro-Soviet sympathies; this sort of thing has long gone out of fashion. The occasional communist who turns up in these circles is treated as an eccentric, rather endearing if he happens to be rich—a millionaire communist is, after all, not unlike a missionary who champions cannibalism. But anti-communism is taboo. It is regarded as vulgar and low class, conjuring images of Senator McCarthy, the Moral Majority, and other unspeakable subjects. In contemporary America and

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Britain, anti-anti-communism has become an important indicator of social status. Such use of ideas as a device for separating the right from the wrong persons cannot be new, since three-quarters of a century ago Arnold Bennett had a character in one of his plays say that " it isn't views that are disreputable, it's the people who hold them."

That anti-anti-communism should have become a hallmark of superior social standing has probably a great deal to do with the shifting standards by which such standing is defined. As Hilton Kramer has pointed out, the diffusion of affluence and the democratization of life-styles which it has made possible, have debased, one by one, the tokens with the help of which the upper classes have traditionally distinguished themselves from their inferiors; art, sexual freedom, travel and good food are now accessible to the multitude and are, therefore, useless as status indicators. Politics is virtually the last reliable social indicator left. " There, as nowhere else, the appeals of snobbery remain sharply defined. Nothing else nowadays gives people of a certain taste such confident sense of the chasm that divides ' us ' from ' them.' "[23] Since the common man, to judge by labour unions and mass-circulation newspapers, is patriotic and anti-communist, patriotism and anti-communism have become unacceptable to anyone with social aspirations. To adapt the terminology devised by the linguist Alan Ross to distinguish the upper (" U ") from the lower (" non-U ") vocabulary current in modern England, anti-communism can be confidently relegated to " non-U " usage, a kind of intellectual equivalent of chewing tobacco.*

WE have identified a number of factors in Western societies which create an atmosphere favourable to Moscow's strategy of political divisiveness. The resentment of intellectuals and academics of what they consider shabby treatment at the hands of their societies; the desire of businessmen to trade without political interference; the need of politicians and special-interest groups for funds from the defence budget; the quest of climbers for social symbols in a world where these have become scarce—all these combine to make influential segments of democratic society unwilling to face the threat of their country's security and prone to minimize it or even deny that it exists.

The power of these groups is much magnified by the influence they exert over the media. That the media, especially the prestige organs, are dominated by people given to anti-anti-communist views, people for whom the main danger to the United States comes from internal failures rather than from external threats, can be in some measure statistically demonstrated. In a 1979–80 survey, 240 editors and reporters of the most influential newspapers, magazines and television networks in the United States indicated that in the preceding two decades four out of five of them

* In the United States and England, that is. In France, attitudes have radically changed during the past decade and anti-communism has become fashionable, but either this information has not yet reached status-seekers in the English-speaking countries or Paris no longer sets the tone in these matters.

[23] *The New Criterion*, No. 10 (June 1983), p. 3.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

had voted for Democratic candidates; in 1972, 81 per cent had cast ballots for George McGovern, a Presidential candidate rejected by the voters in 49 of the 50 states.[24] The situation is similar in Europe: in West Germany, for instance, three-quarters of the journalists employed in television are described as left of centre.[25] Among members of the self-designated public-interest groups in the United States (e.g. consumer and environmental protection societies) the prevalence of such sentiments is higher still—96 per cent of the persons polled from such groups stated that they had voted for McGovern; they further expressed preference for Fidel Castro over Ronald Reagan by a margin of nearly seven to one.[26]

To derive maximal benefit from their convergence of interest with the inward-oriented, isolationist liberal establishment in the United States, Soviet foreign policy specialists have concocted an artificial language of international communication. Its purpose is to create the illusion that the totalitarian East and the democratic West not only have no quarrel but share a common destiny. The threat to democratic societies, this synthetic jargon says, comes not from communist regimes and their aggressive actions, but from nuclear weapons, the arms race and, above all, anti-Sovietism, which the two sides have an equal interest in liquidating. Once this language becomes assimilated by non-communist societies, the communality of language conveys the sense of a communality of interest. Much of the terminology currently employed in the West for East-West relations has either been coined by Soviet specialists or extracted by them from Western liberal sources, assigned the desired meaning, and frozen into mandatory clichés.

A veritable treasury of cant deployed for this specific purpose can be found in a recent book of interviews with Mr George Arbatov. The best-known (if not necessarily the most influential) Soviet expert on the United States, Mr Arbatov has paid many visits to this country, in the course of which he established close contacts with liberal intellectuals and *détente*-prone businessmen. His fluency in English and mastery of the American liberal patois have earned him among his American admirers the reputation of a man who speaks with the authentic voice of the Russian people. In *The Soviet Viewpoint* he draws on the whole gamut of newspeak to assure his readers that the United States and the Soviet Union have one common enemy, the " hard-liners " in Washington:

> The eerie thing about *The Soviet Viewpoint*, written in the form of several long interviews . . . conducted by Dutch journalist Willem Oltmans, is that Georgi Arbatov seems to be impersonating Cyrus Vance.
>
> What the book stunningly reveals is Arbatov's sophistication about

[24] This survey, conducted by a Columbia University research institute and directed by S. Robert Lichter and Stanley Rothman, is reproduced in the *Congressional Record* of 23 March 1982, S2619–2622.

[25] *Epoche*, May 1982, p. 7.

[26] Survey conducted by Lichter and Rothman, summarized in *The Wall Street Journal*, 21 July 1983, under the rubric " Asides," p. 26.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

American liberalism. He knows its peculiar gullibility, and he speaks its idiom with near-perfect nuance. No " running dogs " or " Wall Street lackeys " or " capitalist bloodsuckers " here; Arbatov utters the Leninist vision in terms that might have been lifted from *Foreign Affairs*.

Soviet-American relations have need of *reciprocity*. We must seek *mutually acceptable solutions*. Let us avoid *confrontation*, but instead confront *new realities*, eschewing the while any *mood of nostalgia* that might lead to a *new cold war* (much as such a development might please *hard-liners in Washington*, who are fond of *saber-rattling*).

This is a time for *international cooperation*. We face *global problems*, such as the *depletion of natural resources*, which can't be dealt with through *old perceptions inherited from the cold war.*

Whether one likes it or not, we are chained together on this planet. We dare not treat the situation as a *zero-sum game*, or *continue to squander our resources through the arms race.* Not *if we are to avoid doomsday.* It is imperative that we pursue the *possibility of lessening tensions*, of *lowering the level of military confrontation.*

Despite our *different social systems* there are *overriding common interests, that call for cooperation. We are talking of human survival on this planet, of today's increasingly complex, fragile, and interdependent world*.

The real issue is the *quality of life*. If we are serious about *building a new society*, we must combine a genuine commitment to *social spending* with *a new, broader approach to human rights.*

Remember, *the Vietnam War torpedoed the Great Society*, and in a nuclear war, *there will be no winners.* Think of the *human cost!* Not only of *the war threatening humanity*, but of any *new massive military build-up*.

Any *significant improvement* in the *infrastructure* must be *viewed in the context* of the phenomena of *wide-spread alienation* and *social atomization* stemming from *McCarthyist witch-hunts*, and the *long-term trends* that culminated in *Watergate* with all its attendant *pressures for change* in the *military-industrial complex* whose *macho* posturing has thus far precluded *meaningful redistribution . . . social expenditures . . . purely internal Afghan development. . . .*

" There's hardly a sentence in this book," the author of the review concludes, " that couldn't have been picked up on the narrow frequency band between *The New York Times* and the Institute for Policy Studies."[27]

ON the face of it, such abuse of language may appear harmless—what, indeed, is linguistic pollution against the danger of nuclear war? But language does shape the framework within which people think and communicate; he who controls the vocabulary exerts powerful influence on the content of thought and speech. Thus, the absence from their authorized vocabulary of such terms as *Holocaust* and *Gulag* makes it difficult for citizens of the Soviet Union to discuss these phenomena in

[27] Joe Sobran in the *Dartmouth Review*, III, No. 23 (16 May, 1983).

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

public. Oliver Wendell Holmes rightly classified " verbicide " as a major crime.

From the communist point of view, the principle of what M. Alain Besançon has called *logocracy*, or " rule of words," is correct and deserving of rigorous application. In the inter-war period, the Italian communist Antonio Gramsci constructed a whole political strategy on the premise that ideas are not a superstructure set on an economic base, as orthodox Marxism holds, but a force in their own right. In this theory, mastery of human consciousness becomes a paramount political objective. Although the Soviet establishment rejects Gramsci's views, it quietly puts them into practice. Adam Michnik, a leading theoretician of Polish Solidarity, defines control of consciousness as the principal aim of communism—" The fundamental characteristic of the regime under which I live," he writes, " is the striving for mastery over the human mind."[28] Such mastery is secured, in the first place, by control of the organs of information. Censorship, however, is far less effective than its advocates like to believe, because information can be readily obtained from observation, hearsay, radio broadcasts and various other means difficult to regulate; it has ways of seeping through the tightest of barriers. It is more effective to control thought at the source—that is, in the mind that absorbs and processes the information—and the best way of accomplishing this is by shaping words and phrases in the desired manner.

From the instant they seized power in Russia, the Bolsheviks began to address their subjects in a canonical language deliberately detached from living reality. Its object was to contrive a complete make-believe reality that conformed to their slogans and to them only. " Dictatorship of the proletariat " for a system of government that is a dictatorship over the proletariat is a good example of such usage; " agrarian cooperatives " for state farms imposed by force is another. As the gap between communist " reality " and the reality of life under communism widened, a kind of linguistic schizophrenia developed in the Soviet Union; from there, it spread to other countries with communist regimes. In time, every communist society learned to speak two distinct languages. One is the language of communication among ordinary people, the language they employ when discussing private affairs, that is, things that actually exist; it is rich in slang and adapts its vocabulary to changing conditions. The other is the official language, a dead, abstract idiom used between the authorities and the people they rule, which the latter are required to employ in public. This language reflects not life but the regime's notions of what life ought to be; it is shaped by the rulers' will, rather than by observation and reflection. In the words of one observer, the official language introduced by Stalin and still in use " is no longer a means of communication but of domination . . . The Stalinist speaks not to address others—he speaks to assert, in the very act of pronouncing the word, his monopolistic power to proffer the ' truth ' in accord with the require-

[28] *Szkice* [Sketches] (Cracow, 1981), p. 13.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ments of the moment."[29] George Orwell, who had familiarized himself with the language of Western Stalinists, noted its catastrophic effects on thought:

> As soon as certain topics are raised, the concrete melts into the abstract and no one seems able to think of turns of speech that are not hackneyed: prose consists less and less of *words* chosen for the sake of their meaning, and more and more of *phrases* tacked together like the sections of a prefabricated hen-house . . . It consists of gumming together long strips of words which have already been set in order by someone else, and making the results presentable by sheer humbug.[30]

Such abuse of language in the service of domination instead of communication has dangers also for its perpetrators. In some respects, perhaps, its main victims are even not the ordinary people, who adapt themselves to a regime of bilingualism, but their masters, who grow so accustomed to thinking in the artificial language they have invented that they ultimately lose touch with life. Khrushchev told a Yugoslav diplomat that " in the final years of his life Stalin learned about Russia and the world from films which were made specially for him, and he ruled the country in the belief that everything in the Soviet Union was prospering."[31] This is a *reductio ad absurdum* of manipulating reality.

UNTIL the middle 1950s, linguistic regimentation was confined to the Soviet Union and foreign communist parties. Stalin did not attempt to impose his terminology on anyone outside his political control. Things have changed since his death. The appearance of the " bomb " made it possible for Soviet propagandists to argue that humanity shares one destiny, that it is " chained together," in Mr Arbatov's phrase: coexistence of this sort calls for a common language. Over the past 30 years, a Soviet-type jargon has been spreading over the world; it pervades discussion of everything that touches on East-West relations and increasingly replicates the situation which prevails inside communist societies.

> By calling " autonomous " that which is powerless, " federated " that which is unitary, " democratic " that which is autocratic, " united " that which is schismatic, " popular " that which is imposed by terror, " peaceful " that which incites war—in brief, by systematically corrupting language to obscure reality—the Communists have made inroads into our sense of political reality. Language is, after all, the only medium in which we can think. It is exceedingly difficult to eliminate all the traditional connotations of words—to associate words like " For a lasting peace and a People's Democracy " with neither peace nor popular movements nor democracy.[32]

To disparage the United States–Chinese *rapprochement*, Soviet prop-

[29] Ladislas Bod, " Langage et pouvoir politique: réflexions sur le Stalinisme " [" Language and Political Power: Reflections on Stalinism "] in *Études* (Feb., 1975), p. 178.

[30] " Politics and the English Language," *Selected Essays* (London, 1958), p. 77, p. 82.

[31] Veljko Mićunović, *Moscow Diary* (London, 1980), p. 30.

[32] Ambassador Jeane J. Kirkpatrick, interview with George Urban, Radio Free Europe, Munich, Germany, July, 1983, p. 104.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

agandists have put into circulation the condescending term " China card," and to denigrate United States use of satellites to verify arms-control agreements they dub them " spies in the sky." Sometimes, Soviet language manipulation goes to ridiculous lengths, as when censors insist that Soviet publications refer to the army that is ravaging Afghanistan as " the limited contingent of Soviet troops in Afghanistan " and never in another way.

By formulating and consistently using terms applicable to international relations in the desired mode, Moscow accords them legitimacy even when they bear no relationship to anything real—terms such as " peaceful coexistence," " Zionist racism," or " Polish counter-revolution." The vocabulary of East-West relations, shared by Western liberals and the Soviet apparatus, serves the same purpose as the official jargon inside the Soviet Union. It focuses the discussion on matters that are desired but may or may not exist, and places out of bounds subjects that emphatically do exist but are deemed best unmentioned. It perverts one's perception of phenomena by attaching to them pejorative words when they are considered inimical, and positive ones when they are useful. Thus, the countries of Eastern Europe under the occupation of the Soviet army are labelled " People's Democracies." Such usage is not only deceptive but absurdly tautological: since " democracy " means " people's rule," a " people's democracy " is " people's rule by the people." Because " communism " evokes negative images in the West, it has been gradually supplanted with " socialism." For some time now, Moscow has been calling its bloc the " socialist camp," and this usage too has spread to Western media. The title General Secretary suggests a bureaucratic dictator, so for purposes of foreign dealings it has been replaced with that of President, which, in the Soviet context, is meaningless. How much easier it is, however, to meet and shake hands with the " President " of a " socialist country " than with the dictator of a communist one!

Liberal journalists not only have assimilated much of this vocabulary but also introduced refinements of their own, which are promptly borrowed by Moscow. They routinely call someone critical of the Soviet Union a " hard-line anti-communist," but never refer to anyone as a " soft-line pro-communist," even though every adjective demands its opposite. " Extremist," when applied to a person's views on the Soviet Union, invariably means anti-communist, a pro-Soviet " extremist " being unknown to journalism—the latter is a " moderate."

Linguistic manipulation leads to intellectual confusion, and as such it is dangerous. It enables Soviet political strategists to dominate the intellectual climate of East-West relations and to insinuate themselves into Western political discussions. It allows them to project false identities of interest between the two systems and to incite internecine conflicts of opinion as well as of interest within the Western community. It blurs the line between fiction and reality. If this is allowed to go on, the day may well come when Western citizens, like Stalin in his waning years, will be regaled with specially prepared films that show the world basking in

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

peace, while " limited contingents of Soviet troops " are shooting their way into their homes.

Who Should Be In Charge Of Policy Towards The USSR?

The Department of State is widely thought of as the proper agency to conduct the foreign policy of the United States; an arrogation of this responsibility by another agency of the government is seen as a violation of both the constitutional division of powers and of good political practices. This view is incorrect on two counts. The constitution, in effect, charges the President with the conduct of foreign affairs, so no matter how much authority the President may decide to delegate to his Secretary of State, the ultimate responsibility is his. This means that the State Department cannot be the prime mover of foreign policy: constitutionally it is the agency that implements the President's will.

This holds true also for reasons of practical politics. The belief that the State Department is the proper instrument of foreign policy derives from the fallacious view that foreign policy is synonymous with diplomacy—which, as has been pointed out, is not the case. The Department of State is the branch of government specifically responsible for diplomacy in all its aspects, and this involves, first and foremost, the peaceful resolution of disagreements and conflicts with other sovereign states. This task has a great deal in common with law. And indeed, on closer acquaintance, the Department gives the impression of a giant law firm. Its staff of Foreign Service officers, many of them highly competent in the area of their responsibility, are professionally trained to reach agreements—a successful diplomat is by definition one who knows how to negotiate an agreement favourable to his country. Diplomats have an instinctive aversion to violence and an insurmountable suspicion of ideology; the one is to them evidence of professional failure, the other, a hindrance to accords. Foreign Service officers have as much taste for ideas and political strategies as trial lawyers have for the philosophy of law. They squirm at the very mention of the words *good* and *evil*, which in their professional capacity they regard as meaningless. Since ideas lead to ideology, they scorn ideas, contrasting them with " pragmatism," which in practice means muddling through from case to case, from crisis to crisis, without the need even to consider long-term objectives. They are capable of drafting meticulously crafted position papers setting out policy recommendations or options, without ever asking themselves what the ultimate purpose of these policies is to be. Their attitude towards the representative of even the most hostile power is somewhat like that of one attorney to another: they never allow anger, indignation or any other emotion to enter into their relationship, seeking instead to base it on mutual professional respect, safe in the knowledge that crises come and crises go, but lawyers stay on.

This sort of mentality serves diplomats well when the issues in dispute are specific and therefore negotiable—that is, when the parties quarrel

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

not over the principles of law or the jurisdiction of the court, but over the facts of the case and their interpretation. Essentially, diplomacy is a device for settling disputes out of court, the court, in the case of international conflicts, being the battlefield. It is an irreplaceable method for resolving controversies over such issues as treaties, rescheduling of debts, fishing and water rights, and the myriad other issues among states that life constantly brings forth. But these issues embrace only a part, and not even necessarily the most important part, of international relations as practised in the twentieth century; the latter include also military power, ideology, and a host of other matters that are implicit in Grand Strategy and do not lend themselves to resolution by diplomatic means. As soon as international conflict is shifted to this ground, diplomacy is powerless. The natural reaction of diplomats under these circumstances is to minimize the phenomena they are incompetent to deal with, so as to reduce everything to manageable—that is, negotiable—terms, where their particular skills can come into play.

Because totalitarian regimes do not operate within a narrowly defined concept of foreign policy, the collective record of the world's foreign service in dealing with them has been most unimpressive. By virtue of their professional upbringing, diplomats could never take seriously the ravings of a Lenin, a Hitler or a Mao, and so they dismissed them as rhetoric behind which had to lie concealed the dictator's " real " demands, and concentrated on discovering what those alleged " real " demands were, in order to bring them to the negotiating table. Appeasement, whether of Hitler or of Stalin, so rampant in the foreign offices in their day, was due neither to stupidity nor to treason, but to a *déformation professionelle* of foreign offices. It is astonishing to read, for instance, in what cavalier manner British and American diplomats during the Second World War dismissed the flow of reports that the Nazis were engaged in a systematic programme of exterminating Jews, on the grounds that such things could not be.* One may expand this point and say that most of totalitarian politics, with its ideology, Grand Strategy, psychological warfare, and programmed brutality is outside the intellectual ken and therefore beyond the professional reach of diplomacy. It is, therefore, no service to the Department of State or the profession of diplomacy to charge them with responsibility for problems that they were never meant to cope with.

THUS, for both constitutional reasons and reasons connected with the peculiarities of totalitarian politics, the State Department is not the proper agency to formulate and execute foreign policy towards the Soviet Union or any other totalitarian state. These states play by different rules and must be dealt with accordingly. Since they employ Grand Strategy, to

* See, for example, a report that the US Department of State rejected information of this nature received from the representative of the World Jewish Congresss in Geneva, who in turn had obtained them from a well-informed German industrialist, as " fantastic " and " unsubstantiated." (*The Washington Post*, 28 Sept. 1983, A2.)

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the extent that democracies are capable of coordinated foreign policies, these must be undertaken by the chief executive. In the United States, the natural locus for such coordination is the office of the President and his staff, the National Security Council. At the time of its founding in 1949, the NSC was formally and specifically charged with responsibility for advising the President "with respect to the integration of domestic, foreign and military policies relating to national security"—which is precisely what Grand Strategy is supposed to accomplish. The National Security Council alone is sufficiently close to the President to know his thoughts and political interests. Because it is not a Department, with a large bureaucracy or an influential outside constituency, it is best qualified to coordinate the various branches of administration, which tend to advance contradictory interests and demands. And because it combines in miniature all the skills that go into a Grand Strategy—politics, economics, the military and intelligence—it possesses a unique capability of formulating the kind of foreign policy that the professional diplomat abhors but the current situation requires. The transfer, under President Reagan (on Secretary Haig's insistence) of the main foreign policy coordinating bodies (inter-agency committees) from the NSC to State has had a very detrimental influence on the administration's ability to translate the President's approach to East-West relations into concrete policy. At every occasion, State Department staff sought to water down attempts at developing a United States strategy. Its preference has been and continues to be for traditional "dialogues" with Moscow, even though in the first three years of the Reagan administration such exchanges have yielded no results whatever. It has an abiding faith that agreements on small issues lead to accords on major ones, although the entire history of Soviet foreign policy shows this faith to be misplaced. Whenever the NSC sought to assert what clearly were the President's wishes, the alarmed Department of State would intercede, provoking political and jurisdictional disputes. This, of course, is nothing new; rivalry between NSC and State is embedded in the system. Every President seeks to resolve it, usually by making the Secretary of State responsible for foreign policy. It is an unworkable solution as long as there are in the world countries not heirs to that Western diplomatic tradition of which the Secretary of State is the American custodian—and this is likely to be for some time to come.

SOVIET policy is conducted globally from the International Department of the Central Committee. This being the case, it would be desirable for the United States to create a counterpart institution to monitor Soviet activities globally. As of now, no such body exists: neither at the National Security Council, nor at the Department of State, nor at the Central Intelligence Agency is there a group of experts who follow from day to day the plans and activities of the International Department. The situation in the Department of State in this respect is remarkably antiquated, dating in conception to the nineteenth century. The principal

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

political desks at State are organized on the geographic principle: the Soviet Union comes within the purview of the Assistant Secretary for European Affairs, who is also responsible for all of Western and Eastern Europe, and, as if this were not enough, Canada as well. An official responsible for this vast area, where are located most of the allies of the United States, must of necessity devote his attention mainly to relations with friendly states. He thus has neither the time nor the personnel to deal adequately with the central problem of United States foreign policy, which is the Soviet bloc.

To make matters still worse, because of the regional nature of the political desks, no one office at State is responsible for tracking the international communist movement as such: the Latin American desk follows Soviet activities in Cuba and Nicaragua; the African desk those in Angola; the Middle Eastern desk gathers information on Soviet activities in Syria and Lebanon. There is no overview and therefore no sense of Soviet Grand Strategy or of the fluctuating Soviet " line " in regard to broader issues, which are not primarily regional. The present arrangement ensures that the whole picture of Soviet global policy is broken down into disjointed fragments which the regional desks cannot properly interpret because they are not aware of the broader context into which they fit.

One way to remedy this shortcoming would be to appoint a State Department official, at the rank of Under-Secretary or Counsellor, to assume responsibility for monitoring East-West relations and Soviet strategy in their broadest sense in all the fields and in all the regions where they manifest themselves. Only in such a manner will the government feel the pulse of Soviet global activities and the Secretary of State be in a position to advise the President on an intelligent response to them. For this to happen, of course, the Secretary of State must first persuade himself that unlike the United States, the Soviet Union has a Grand Strategy that is not only pragmatic but also ideological, and not only regional but also global in scope.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Brezhnev–Andropov Legacy: Implications for the Future

Elliot R. Goodman

TO assert that past is prologue seems especially appropriate when one tries to anticipate the shape of Soviet society under the leadership of Konstantin Chernenko, since Chernenko was so deeply involved with the policies of Leonid Brezhnev during Brezhnev's long tenure in office. What exactly was the state of affairs in the Soviet Union at the time of Brezhnev's death? How could one characterize the initiatives which were undertaken to reform the Soviet system during Yuri Andropov's brief period as supreme leader, and how lasting are the effects of his programmes likely to be? What lessons can be learned from these experiments as they bear upon future attempts to confront the basic problems that are inherent in the very nature of the Soviet system? These basic features of Soviet society will still have to be dealt with after what promises to be another period of transitional rule, this time under Chernenko, has also passed into history.

If one looks to those indicators that reflect upon the standard of living of the average Soviet citizen at the time of Brezhnev's death in November 1982 it is apparent that there was a slack if not stagnant civilian economy. In fact some of the traditional industrial indices, such as the production of steel, coal, machine tools, cement, paper, automobiles and tractors, reported 1982 levels that were actually below those of 1978.

The torpor of Brezhnev's last four years was also evident in agriculture. Before the Brezhnev era the Soviet Union never had more than two consecutive bad harvests. At the time of Brezhnev's death it had suffered four bad harvests in a row. Bad weather can always be cited as a contributing factor, but surely that is only a partial, lame excuse. If one looks at the post-war period, Soviet agricultural exports in 1962 had reached the highest point in half a century, and in 1964 Soviet agricultural output hit a record level. Per capita Soviet meat and poultry consumption had grown following Stalin's death, but it then began to slow down under Brezhnev's rule. By the time Brezhnev died, the Soviet consumption level for meat was about one-half the American level. The structural inefficiencies of Soviet collective agriculture are apparent when contrasted with US farming. While Soviet agriculture only produces 80 per cent as much as that of the US, the Soviet Union uses 8 times the number of farm workers that are required for farming in America.[1] Moreover, as Brezhnev himself had complained, most Soviet agricultural storage and processing facilities were, on average, located some 200 to 300 miles away from the fields they serviced and there was only a primitive highway

[1] Murray Feshbach, *The Soviet Union: Population Trends and Dilemmas* (Population Reference Bureau, Washington, DC), Vol. 37, No. 3, August 1982, p. 9.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

network to grain elevators, with the result that about 25 per cent of the harvests ultimately rotted in the field.

An intelligence report to the Joint Economic Committee of Congress of June 1982 emphasized the cascading effect of Soviet transportation difficulties. The Soviet economy was marked by

> shortages and delays of materials and products essential to both civil and defense production. . . . In many cases chaotic conditions in the Soviet rail system were responsible for the disruptions. . . . The combination of rail bottlenecks, rolling stock shortages and lack of materials became self-reinforcing and had an impact on all manufacturers.

The Soviet economy, the report concluded, is faced with

> an aging industrial infrastructure, perennial agricultural difficulties, low incentives for workers, slow labour force growth, inefficient capital investment, and a deteriorating ability to meet the hard currency requirements of both the domestic economy and client states.[2]

The wasteful use of resources and the low priority given to the consumer sectors of the Soviet economy had always kept the general standard of living appallingly depressed. The gap between the American and Soviet living standards narrowed somewhat during the 1960s, but then under Brezhnev it again began to widen during the 1970s. According to the calculations of Professor Abram Bergson of Harvard, in 1981 a comparison of material living standards between the Soviet Union and the United States put Soviet per capita consumption at 37 per cent of the level in the US. This ratio, which was calculated in quantitative terms, Bergson added, must be considered as an overstatement, since it did not take into account the quality of Soviet consumer goods which are universally inferior to those available to the American consumer.[3]

One particularly glaring deficiency in living standards is reflected in Soviet housing conditions. An authoritative 1979 study of Soviet housing estimated that 30 per cent or more of the Soviet urban population still lived either communally, with unrelated families and singles sharing apartments, or in crowded factory dormitories. In the countryside housing conditions were invariably worse.[4] According to the calculations of another scholar in 1981, Soviet housing " still did not meet the minimum standard for health and decency set by the Soviet government in 1928."[5]

[2] Statement of Lt. Gen. James Williams, Director, Defense Intelligence Agency, to the Joint Economic Committee, Congress of the United States, 29 June 1982, Washington, DC, pp. 1–2.

[3] Abram Bergson, " Soviet Economic Slowdown and the 1981–85 Plan," in *Problems of Communism*, Vol. 30, No. 3, May-June 1981, p. 33.

[4] Henry W. Morton, " The Soviet Quest for Better Housing—An Impossible Dream? " in *Soviet Economy in a Time of Change*, Joint Economic Committee, Congress of the United States (Washington, DC, 1979), Vol. 1, p. 809.

[5] Gertrude E. Schroeder, " Soviet Living Standards: Achievement and Prospects," in *Soviet Economy in the 1980s: Problems and Prospects*, Joint Economic Committee, Congress of the United States (Washington, DC, 1983), Part 2, p. 371

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE chronic shortages of goods and services available through official state channels, and the poor quality of both, has long since given rise, as one might expect, to a second, unofficial, parallel Soviet economy. This phenomenon, which came to full bloom during the Brezhnev period, is now the subject of a sizeable body of scholarly literature in the West. These detailed studies relate the scope and nature of black-market transactions and describe the anatomy of institutionalized corruption in the Soviet Union.[6]

Such a clandestine network of private enterprise can often supply those products and personal services which are in demand and which are generally sold at whatever price the market will bear. Some of the bribes which are routinely paid might be considered more moral than others. For example, the generally poor quality of state-supplied medical services often makes it imperative to bribe doctors in order to obtain better medical care, and even to bribe nurses in hospitals so as to be sure of getting elementary supplies and proper nursing attention. More questionable is the rather widespread practice of individuals who, for careerist reasons, bribe academics to ghost write theses and education officials to issue fraudulent diplomas and degrees. In order to obtain permits for housing, or to move into better housing, bribery of officials who control this scarce resource is almost taken for granted.

Similar networks of bribery and corruption have permeated Soviet industry and trade. Here it becomes apparent that while personal avarice plays its part in the movement of scarce resources from one dealer to another, there is also frequently present a motive of which the Party and state can approve, namely the fulfilment of state-assigned quotas and production goals. In industry the rigidities and inefficiencies inherent in an overly centralized planned, command economy impose inflexible burdens that cannot be met on time without having Soviet enterprise managers go outside the official economy in order to make their own private arrangements. During the Brezhnev era this increasingly engendered the growth of a system of pervasive corruption, in which plant, factory and construction representatives found it necessary to bribe officials at various levels in the different ministries, planning agencies and committees, and in assorted Party organs, in order to get the delivery of

[6] See for example, Dmitri K. Simes, " The Soviet Parallel Market," in *Survey*, Vol. 21, No. 3, Summer 1975, pp. 42–52; A. Katsenelinboigen, " Coloured Markets in the Soviet Union," in *Soviet Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 1, Jan. 1977, pp. 62–85; Valery Chalidze, *Criminal Russia* (New York, 1977); Gregory Grossman, " The ' Second Economy ' of the USSR," in *Problems of Communism*, Vol. 26, Sept.–Oct. 1977, pp. 25–40; Konstantin Simis, " The Machinery of Corruption in the Soviet Union," in *Survey*, Vol. 23, No. 4, Autumn 1977–78, pp. 35–55; Gregory Grossman, " Notes on the Illegal Private Economy and Corruption," in *Soviet Economy in a Time of Change*, Vol. 1, pp. 834–55; the following three papers prepared for a conference on the second economy of the USSR, Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies, Washington, DC, Jan. 1980: No. 110, J. M. Montais and Susan Rose-Ackerman, " Corruption in a Soviet-Type Economy: Theoretical Considerations," No. 111, Konstantin Simis, " The Second Economy and Corruption at the District Level," No. 113, Dennis O'Hearn, " The Second Economy in Consumer Goods and Services "; Dennis O'Hearn, " The Consumer Second Economy: Size and Effects," in *Soviet Studies*, Vol. 32, No. 2, April 1980, pp. 218–34; Konstantin Simis, " Russia's Underground Millionaires," in *Fortune*, 29 June 1981, pp. 36–42, 47, 50; Konstantin Simis, *USSR: The Corrupt Society* (New York, 1982); David Wedgwood Benn, " Problems of Authority in the Soviet Union," in *The World Today*, Vol. 40, No. 3, March 1984, pp. 107–13.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

supplies they needed in sufficient quantities and on time, which otherwise could simply not be obtained through officially sanctioned channels.

The trade network in the Soviet Union is even more deeply enmeshed in bribery than is industry. The managers of wholesale and retail trade centres are linked together into a system of suppliers who will release their goods with requisition notes that can only be obtained from the various ministries or local authorities. These " gate keeping " officials are responsive to monetary bribes or other gifts in kind, before their supplies can reach the ordinary consumer. Again directors of retail trade outlets put aside selected goods for special customers who pay for them under the table at high prices. The store manager is also forced to recover his costs previously paid in bribes to officials higher up the trade ladder by selling ordinary consumers low-quality goods in short measure or short weight.

Thus a massive and systematic network of bribery has been built into the functioning of the entire Soviet economy. The corrosive effects of such bribery, corruption and black-market activity have spilled over into all aspects of society, which include the decadent life-styles among the bribe-takers in the ruling Soviet élite on the one hand, to the lowly criminal world of illegal business on the other. In its extreme manifestations this illegal activity has produced organized syndicates of crime.

REFLECTING upon the general condition of the Soviet economy at the time of Brezhnev's death, Henry Kissinger simply called it

> an economic disaster. To run a large modern economy by central planning is to institutionalize backwardness and inefficiency. Ironically, the attempt to achieve total predictability leads to near-absolute arbitrariness. Where managers can choose neither customers nor suppliers, all incentives work the wrong way. Managers deliberately underestimate their capacities lest the failure to reach an ambitious target reflect on their political reliability. Since they cannot influence allocations except by bureaucratic maneuvers outside the economic process, they will hoard labor and materials at the cost of productivity—to avoid being caught short by sudden bottlenecks outside their control. Thus the paradoxes of the Soviet economy: shortages and surpluses exist side by side, and congenitally inferior goods are produced with no relation to the desires of the people. It is an amazing phenomenon—a superpower whose intercontinental missiles terrify the world cannot produce a single industrial commodity competitive with the products of even newly developed market economies like South Korea and Singapore, not to speak of the mature industrial democracies of Western Europe, Japan, Canada and the United States.[7]

What we find in the Soviet civilian economy is a pattern of life that, in good measure, is similar to that of the economically underdeveloped countries. As Professor Gertrude Schroeder of the University of Virginia commented in her 1981 study of the Soviet economy, the pattern of

[7] *Newsweek*, 29 Nov. 1982, pp. 31–32.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Soviet consumer spending " in many respects conforms to that in the less developed countries, and remarkably little progress toward a more modern pattern has been made in recent decades." She particularly noted the extraordinary large share, some 17 per cent of Soviet household money, that is spent on alcohol, compared with from 1 to 6 per cent for the US and other Western countries. This 17 per cent figure, she added, did not include production of home-brew, which clearly made the Soviet Union the world leader in the hard-liquor-drinking league.[8] The result is that the Soviet Union has the world's biggest alcoholism problem, not only disrupting family life but seriously reducing industrial output. Low Soviet labour productivity and a high rate of Soviet industrial accidents can be attributed in good part to workers showing up on the job drunk. Professor Vladimir Treml of Duke, who first published the results of his research on Soviet alcoholism in 1981, estimated on the basis of demographic data and forensic medicine reports that

> deaths from acute alcohol poisoning have been rising very rapidly since the late 1960s and stood at 40,000 in 1976, or 15·9 deaths per 100,000 of population. This high mortality is significant since it is completely outside the range of world experience. In recent years, deaths in the US from alcohol poisoning were recorded at 400, or 0·18 per 100,000.

The Soviet death rate (15·9 per 100,000) comes to more than 88 times the comparable US death rate (0·18 per 100,000). " The US rate is roughly representative of world rates." Treml added that

> the high number of deaths from alcohol poisoning could have been significantly reduced by proper and prompt medical attention. Death from acute alcohol poisoning is not instantaneous and may take many hours, during which the drinker could be saved by relatively simple medical techniques. The fact that mortality from alcohol poisoning is so high, and is rising, reflects not only on the extent of alcoholism in the USSR, but on the poor state of health and medical services.[9]

THE abysmal state of Soviet health services, which continued to deteriorate towards the end of Brezhnev's rule, was first dramatically brought to public attention in a long article by the Harvard demographer, Nick Eberstadt, in his review in the 19 February 1981 issue of the *New York Review of Books*, of the study entitled *Rising Infant Mortality in the USSR in the 1970s* by Christopher Davis of the University of Birmingham and Murray Feshbach of the US Bureau of the Census, and subsequently a professor at Georgetown. This joint study, an additional one published by professor Feshbach in August 1982,[10] and

[8] *New York Times*, 27 Nov. 1981.

[9] Vladimir G. Treml, " Death from Alcohol Poisoning in the USSR," *Wall Street Journal*, 10 Nov. 1981. Treml subsequently published a full report under the same title in *Soviet Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 4, Oct. 1982, pp. 487–505, and *Alcohol in the USSR: A Statistical Study* (Durham, NC, 1982).

[10] Feshbach, *The Soviet Union*. For a profile of Feshbach and a description of his unique research methods which unearth obscure data on the texture of Soviet society, see Cullen Murphy's " Watching the Russians," in *The Atlantic Monthly*, Feb. 1983, pp. 33–46, 49–52.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

other detailed research that appeared shortly thereafter provide an abundance of data on Soviet health care—all showing how bad it is.

In the early 1970s the Soviet infant mortality rate began to rise rapidly by more than 50 per cent, so that by 1980 it was more than triple the rate for the United States.[11] In 1971 the death rate for the Soviet population as a whole was 8·2 per 1,000 persons. By 1980 it had climbed to 10·4 per 1,000 persons, a 25 per cent increase in mortality. Life expectancy in the US in 1980 stood at 70 years for males and 77·7 years for females. By way of contrast, male life expectancy in the Soviet Union, which stood at 66 years in 1964 fell to 61·9 years by 1980. Soviet female life expectancy also fell, from 74 years in 1964 to 73·5 years in 1980. Thus by 1980 life expectancy for American males was more than eight years longer than for Soviet males, and that of American females was more than four years longer than for Soviet females. In addition, the nearly 12-year Soviet gap between male and female life expectancy is the largest in the developed world.[12]

How to explain these astounding figures? First, an examination of the factors that account for the rise in Soviet infant mortality gives us clues to many of the other pervasive problems in Soviet society. Primitive health care is surely one such factor. As Davis and Feshbach assert: " Poor health among pregnant women is still an important cause of infant mortality in the USSR."[13] Nearly all Soviet women of working age work, and a very high percentage of them work while pregnant, many performing physically strenuous jobs that are generally reserved for men in the West.[14] Moreover poor prenatal care among busy working women is doubtless linked to " the increasing proportion of premature, underweight newborns, whose chances of dying before age one are 20 times those of full-term infants."[15] Then there is the damage done to the female reproductive system through the repeated use of induced abortions. " Because of the inadequacy of Soviet contraceptives, abortion is the primary form of birth control in the Soviet Union." A conservative estimate concludes that there is " a lifetime average of six abortions for every Soviet woman (12 times the US rate)." However, since Moslem women and those living in rural areas tend to condemn abortion as a crime, the abortion rate for urban Russian and other non-Moslem women " must be substantially higher than the overall average."[16] Thus the average urban Russian woman has *more* than six abortions. A 1983 study of Moscow women records that routinely in an abortion performed " as late as the twelfth week, the operation takes place without drugs. . . .

[11] Christopher Davis and Murray Feshbach, *Rising Infant Mortality in the USSR in the 1970s*, International Population Reports, Series P–95, No. 74, US Bureau of the Census (Washington, DC, 1980), p. 5.

[12] Feshbach, *The Soviet Union*, p. 34; American Council of Life Insurance, *1983 Life Insurance Fact Book* (Washington, DC, 1983), p. 92.

[13] Davis and Feshbach, *Rising Infant Mortality*, p. 12.

[14] Ibid. p. 11.

[15] Feshbach, *The Soviet Union*, p. 34.

[16] Davis and Feshbach, *Rising Infant Mortality*, p. 13.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Sedatives and anesthetics are rarely given—occasionally laughing gas is used."[17]

Infant mortality is also related to the inadequate number and poor quality of Soviet child-care centres. The drive to bring women into the working force has greatly expanded preschool-aged child care facilities. Nevertheless " only 40 per cent of preschool-aged children can be accommodated and there are many reports of overcrowded facilities and undertrained, overworked, and underpaid staff resulting in such high rates of illness among children that many mothers refuse to resort to state-run day-care centers even when places are available."[18]

Regular influenza epidemics among infants and young children also contribute to a high mortality rate. In the rest of the industrialized world influenza is only considered a nuisance, but in the Soviet Union it has not yet been brought under control and on an average it afflicts about 30 million Soviet citizens each year.[19] Influenza in infants and children sets the stage for lethal secondary bacterial infections like pneumonia, which is often recorded as a major cause of death. A closer examination indicates that pneumonia is frequently contracted by poorly fed infants with rickets, which so weakens the young patient that influenza then easily finishes them off. But rickets, which is virtually unknown in the rest of the developed world, is very easy to cure, since it comes from an inadequate diet and vitamin deficiency.[20] If Soviet medicine is incapable of dealing with such elementary problems, it is probable that it does not deal very effectively with more complicated ones. Soviet sources reveal that the low standards of hygiene in Soviet urban hospitals cause about one-third of all patients to contract post-operative infections while in the hospital, while rural medical facilities are distinctly worse. A US rate of 3 per cent post-operative hospital infections would be considered high.[21]

FINALLY we come full circle to the problem of alcoholism. Soviet research indicates that the rate of alcoholism is growing faster among women than among men. A 1980 Moscow study of a group of chronically alcoholic women revealed that of the 291 pregnancies conceived by these women, 54 children either were medically aborted, were miscarried or still-born, while 22 infants died in the first two years of life. Of the remaining number of 237 infants who were live-born, 118 or 45·6 per cent were healthy, while 97 or 41 per cent were born mentally retarded. Thus the percentage of mentally retarded infants was almost as great as of those that had been born alive and healthy.[22]

Alcohol abuse is also a major cause of disease and death in Soviet

[17] Carola Hansson and Karin Liden, *Moscow Women* (New York, 1983), pp. 114–15.
[18] Feshbach, *The Soviet Union*, p. 240; Davis and Feshbach, *Rising Infant Mortality*, p. 19.
[19] Murray Feshbach, " Issues in Soviet Health Problems," in *Soviet Economy in the 1980s*, Part 2, p. 224.
[20] Davis and Feshbach, *Rising Infant Mortality*, pp. 16, 18.
[21] Feshbach, " Issues," in *Soviet Economy in the 1980s*, Part 2, p. 215; Davis and Feshbach, *Rising Infant Mortality*, p. 20.
[22] Feshbach, " Issues," in *Soviet Economy in the 1980s*, Part 2, p. 225.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

males, especially in working-age Soviet men. Feshbach's figures on alcoholism in Soviet society, which he calls " pandemic," fully confirm the research of Treml and other scholars. While alcohol consumption has also increased in the US, the Soviet Union is distinguished by the fact that hard liquor, like vodka and the self-brewed "*samogon*," form a considerably higher percentage of alcoholic drinks when compared to the US, and gulping down hard liquor Soviet-style raises the ethanol level dangerously in the bloodstream and is more lethal than Western drinking habits. One 1982 Soviet study states that one-third of all Soviet coronary heart disease is related to such alcohol abuse.[23] The pervasive consumption of alcohol can be summed up in Feshbach's conclusion: " Urban families in the Soviet Union devote nearly the same proportion of their weekly budgets to alcohol as US families do to food."[24] The search for alcohol is so intense that besides things like vodka and the self-brewed "*samogon*," there is widespread drinking of what is called " technical spirits," that is, products with alcohol derivitives such as anti-freeze solutions, *eau-de-Cologne*, aftershave lotion, and even furniture polish and insecticides.

In sum, from the point of view of the conditions of life for the average Soviet citizen, the Soviet Union scarcely lives up to its own characterization as the shining beacon for all progressive mankind. Rather, the Soviet system must be judged a failed society.

DOES this mean that the Brezhnev regime had no accomplishments? Quite the contrary, it achieved an astounding success in the one area to which it gave priority and where it devoted its best brains and its principal resources, namely, in the military sector.

The post-Khrushchev leadership's decision to make a significant increase in military spending was formally embodied in the decisions of the 23rd Party Congress in March 1966. The new leaders, who had watched with disappointment the failure to achieve Khrushchev's exceedingly ambitious goals for a rapid rise in living standards and the consequent failure to expand Soviet influence through the attraction of its way of life, now evidently placed their hopes for a decisive breakthrough on a world scale on a sharp rise in Soviet military power. In any event, this was the path adopted and relentlessly pursued.

According to CIA estimates, at first the Brezhnev regime devoted between 11 and 13 per cent of the Soviet GNP to military purposes, with a 4 to 5 per cent annual increase in military spending. A revised 1983 CIA document estimated that the 4 to 5 per cent annual increases applied to the period between 1965 and 1976, but slowed to an annual 2 per cent increase during the 1976 to 1981 period. Since the rate of growth for the entire Soviet economy decreased markedly in the latter half of the 1970s, this revised estimate of a 2 per cent annual increase in military spending meant that the military burden still represented about 13 or 14 per cent of

[23] Ibid. p. 206; Feshbach, *The Soviet Union*, p. 35.
[24] Feshbach, *The Soviet Union*, p. 35.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Soviet GNP.[25] A subsequent NATO study confirmed these figures.[26] Some measure of the sacrifice this required from the Soviet people can be derived by comparing US military spending during the same period. Following the American involvement in Vietnam, US defence expenditures up to the Reagan administration remained at about 5 to 6 per cent of the US GNP. The much larger appropriations for military purposes in President Reagan's projected five-year plan anticipated a rise in defence spending from 5·6 per cent of the GNP in 1981 to 7·4 per cent of the GNP in 1987.[27] Under pressure from Congress, the administration has had to cut these proposed increases, and further cuts will doubtless be forthcoming as Congress tries to reduce the huge US budget deficits. Nevertheless, the much publicized cost of rearming America would remain somewhere in the area of 7 per cent of the US GNP, which would still be only about half of what the Soviet regime has continued to allocate to defence as a portion of its GNP. The stark nature of the comparison does not end there, however, since the Soviet GNP is less than 60 per cent (or perhaps even 50 per cent) of the US GNP. When one recalls that the much larger Soviet per centage outlay for the military had to come from a much smaller GNP, this would give some notion of what the Soviet regime has taken out of the hide of the average Soviet citizen in order to carry out its military build-up during the Brezhnev era.

PERHAPS a more vivid comparison of the military efforts of both countries can be derived from calculating the production of military hardware. Here we encounter esoteric debates about estimating defence expenditures, depending upon the methodology used. In Secretary of Defence Harold Brown's last annual report to Congress in January 1981, he noted that the dollar cost for the US to replicate Soviet military expenditures in 1980 meant that the Soviet Union has spent 50 per cent more on defence than had the US. But even if one used a more conservative cost basis, estimated in rubles, the Soviets still outspent the US in real terms by 30 per cent.[28] The 1983 CIA estimate of Soviet defence spending, which lowered the annual rate of military spending after 1976 from 4 to 2 per cent, showed

> that despite somewhat slower growth in recent years the costs of Soviet defense activities still exceed those of the United States by a large margin. In 1981 the dollar costs of Soviet defense activities were 45 percent greater than US outlays; procurement costs alone were also 45 percent larger. A comparison in ruble prices shows that

[25] Joint Economic Committee, Congress of the United States, Briefing Paper, *USSR: Economic Trends and Policy Developments*, Office of Soviet Analysis, Central Intelligence Agency, 14 Sept. 1983, pp. 8, 11.

[26] *Atlantic News*, No. 1593, 27 Jan. 1984; *New York Times*, 30 Jan. 1984.

[27] Barry R. Rosen and Stephen Van Evera, "Defense Policy and the Reagan Administration," in *International Security*, Vol. 8, No. 1, Summer 1983, p. 3. See also, Samuel F. Wells, Jr., "A Question of Priorities: A Comparison of the Carter and Reagan Defense Programs," in *Orbis*, Vol. 27, No. 3, Fall 1983, pp. 641–66.

[28] Secretary of Defence Harold Brown, Annual Report to the Congress, Fiscal Year 1982 (Washington, DC, 19 Jan. 1981), p. 15.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> Soviet defense costs were 25 percent higher than those of the United States.[29]

In outspending the US according to either calculation, the Kremlin obtained a considerably larger portion of military investment for its money than was possible for the US. America has a very expensive volunteer military service in which half of the US military budget goes for manpower costs, while the cheap Soviet conscript armed forces only consume less than one-fourth of the Soviet defence expenditures. Contrariwise, the US research, development and weapons acquisition programme has only accounted for a little over one-fourth of its military expense, while the portion of the Soviet military budget devoted to weapons acquisition has been close to 50 per cent. That meant that by 1980 the Soviet Union was out-investing and out-producing the US in military equipment at a rate of 2:1. Moreover, the newly deployed Soviet equipment increasingly matched US deployed equipment in terms of its quality.[30]

Again, in taking the revised 1983 CIA estimate into account it is necessary to note that the rate of Soviet procurement of military hardware appeared to be almost flat in the 1976–81 period.[31] One explanation for this phenomenon given by Western military specialists is that the Soviet Union has begun to encounter the difficulties common in the West, namely, that higher costs and slower delivery times accompany the production of more technologically sophisticated weapons systems. The reverse side of this coin, however, is that lower production rates will be offset by the increasingly superior quality of Soviet arms and equipment.[32] The slight slowdown in recent procurement rates should not obscure the larger picture. A 1983 US Defence Department intelligence report summed up the Brezhnev years:

> The Soviet defense industry has grown steadily and consistently over the past 20–25 years. Their military industrial base is by far the world's largest in number of facilities and physical size, and it produces more individual military systems in greater quantities than any other nation. Physical growth and the commitment of large quantities of financial and human resources are its most dynamic aspect.[33]

WHEN one compares the arms and equipment of the two alliances that were put in place in the centre of Europe in the late 1960s and 1970s, which was widely advertised as the " era of *détente*," the results of the sustained Soviet military build-up are especially

[29] *USSR: Economic Trends*, Central Intelligence Agency, 14 Sept. 1983, p. 10.

[30] Under-Secretary of Defence William J. Perry, Annual Report to the Congress, Fiscal Year 1982, Department of Defense Program for Research Development and Acquisition (Washington, DC, 20 Jan. 1981), pp. 1–2.

[31] *USSR: Economic Trends*, Central Intelligence Agency, 14 Sept. 1983, p. 8.

[32] Drew Middleton, " Soviet Arms: Their Quality is Upgraded," *New York Times*, 12 Feb. 1984.

[33] Statement by Maj. Gen. Schuyler Bissell, Deputy Director, Defense Intelligence Agency, to the Joint Economic Committee, Congress of the United States, 28 June 1983, p. 6.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

apparent. The NATO consensus figures released in May 1982,[34] which closely tally with unofficial, authoritative sources, such as the annual reports of the International Institute for Strategic Studies, reveal enormous disparities.

	Warsaw Pact	NATO
main battle tanks	42,500	13,000
anti-tank guided weapon launchers	24,300	8,100
artillery/mortars	31,500	10,750
armoured personnel carriers and infantry vehicles	78,800	30,000

The enormous imbalance of these aggregate totals, however, do not adequately indicate the aggregate military capabilities that each alliance has put in place. The problem derives from the asymmetries between the two alliances. The Kremlin so dominates its weaker " allies " that the Soviet Union accounts for some 90 per cent of the Warsaw Pact's military expenditures. The result is that the Pact's military concepts, arms and equipment are largely dictated from Moscow and standardized on Soviet doctrine and models, which gives its collective forces greater military flexibility and effectiveness than the force imbalance calculated in purely quantitative terms would indicate. NATO, on the other hand, is also dominated by its strongest member, but America has a series of relatively robust partners, like West Germany, Britain and Italy, each of which either insists on manufacturing its own weapons systems, or on collaborating with other Europeans in order to resist the adoption of American models. France is not even a member of the NATO integrated command structure and has always been in the forefront of the effort to produce French arms and equipment, or to initiate French-sponsored arms consortia with other Europeans so that the Europeans will " buy European."[35] The result has been a serious absence of standardization or even interoperability of NATO's arms and equipment, with the attendant inability of one ally to fight effectively or sometimes even to communicate with the forces from an allied country on its flanks. It has also meant wasteful redundancies in the different defence establishments, which form a collection of uncoordinated national forces instead of a collective NATO force. NATO has attempted to create some degree of unity by forming an integrated command structure, but it is an integrated structure that does not command integrated national forces. The extravagant duplication of national bureaucracies and personnel costs also extend to the needless waste of money spent for the research, development and acquisition of arms and equipment. In short, NATO's military contributions are *less* than the sum of its parts.

[34] *NATO and the Warsaw Pact: Force Comparisons*, Foreword by Joseph M. A. H. Luns, Secretary General of NATO, May 1982, p. 11.

[35] Elliot R. Goodman, " France and Arms for the Atlantic Alliance: The Standardization—Interoperability Problem," in *Orbis*, Vol. 24, No. 3, Fall 1980, pp. 541–71.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

One could object that the Russians have Pact partners who might be less than enthusiastic in their willingness to fight for Soviet aims in Europe. The Soviet leaders have foreseen this problem and have taken systematic steps to maintain their centralized control. As Christopher Jones demonstrates in his perceptive study of the Warsaw Pact, Soviet military controls have not only honeycombed the various non-Russian forces of Bulgaria, Hungary, East Germany, Poland and Czechoslovakia, so as to prevent the armed forces of those nations " from adopting military policies that would give those national armies the capabilities of defending national territory by national means," but have long enhanced the Soviet capacity for rapid occupation of these states as well as having prepared the conditions to cope with the strains of occupation. Romania, Yugoslavia and Albania are not integrated under such Russian control, but the five nations that have been, represent a much greater strategic value in Central Europe. Soviet leadership over East European communist parties has also reinforced its set of military controls, since Moscow aims to integrate these national parties into an international system in which each Party must remain dependent upon Moscow in order to remain in power in its own country. Finally, the Pact has a number of agencies that preside over the United Armed Forces (UAF), which drills Pact forces for offensive action outside the home territory of each national army. Since these integrated Pact forces are under Russian control, they are designed " to prevent the formation of a military-political bloc of East European states which excludes the USSR." Current UAF arrangements assign 546,000 East European troops to this common command structure, which also contains 785,000 Soviet troops.[36]

There are other asymmetries between the two alliances that also favour the East. The Soviet Union has trained and prepared Pact troops to employ chemical and possibly biological weapons, which have been tested by Soviet clients in combat in South-East Asia as well as by Soviet troops in Afghanistan. The prospect of the use of such weapons upon inadequately prepared NATO forces in Europe, as well as upon a totally unprepared civilian population, could be as devastating as the use of nuclear weapons.[37]

Finally, there is the difference in geography that affects the reinforcement and resupply capability of each alliance. Three thousand miles of highly vulnerable ocean lanes separate the US from Europe, while the Soviet Union has much shorter and more secure interior, overland lines for the logistical support of its forces. The US has prepositioned some of its heavy arms and equipment in Europe, but there is a limit to the feasibility of this programme. In sum, not only does the Warsaw Pact badly outnumber NATO in conventional military hardware, but it also

[36] Christopher D. Jones, *Soviet Influence in Eastern Europe: Political Autonomy and the Warsaw Pact* (New York, 1981), pp. 1–2, 144–50.

[37] Donald M. Kerr and Steven A. Maaranen, " The Nuclear Defense of Europe," in *The Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 6, No. 4, Autumn 1983, p. 99.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

has a greater ability to sustain a military offensive once it has been launched.

SOME might argue that the Kremlin's decisive advantage in conventional forces in the centre of Europe is of no consequence so long as the US and the Soviet Union have reached a condition of rough parity in strategic nuclear systems that tend to offset and neutralize each other. But it is precisely because the American and Soviet nuclear weapons systems do tend to deter and neutralize each other at the strategic, inter-continental level that decisive imbalance at the European theatre level becomes increasingly important. Whether the US nuclear guarantee to protect Europe is, in fact, less valid than it once was is politically not as important as the European perception that superpower nuclear parity has made the US guarantee less credible. In Europe it is not the prospect of having to fight a war on uneven terms that is the most pressing problem, ominous as that prospect may be. Rather it is the political coercion the Kremlin can exercise over European politics based on a credible threat of violence that is most persuasive, in terms of day-to-day conduct of political life. If NATO could have claimed to offset the conventional force imbalance by Western superiority in European theatre nuclear weapons the dimensions of the Soviet threat might have been considerably diminished. But this was not the case either. It was precisely the looming prospect of Soviet theatre nuclear superiority that led Chancellor Helmut Schmidt to call for the redress of the Euro-strategic nuclear imbalance, which was also completely in Moscow's favour. In December 1979 NATO unanimously agreed to deploy 572 Pershing II and ground launched cruise missiles on European bases in order to offset to some extent the Soviet SS-20s, which Moscow began to deploy at a steady rate beginning at the end of 1977, unless mutually satisfactory restraints on such intermediate range nuclear forces (INF) could be negotiated before the December 1983 deadline which NATO had set for its own INF deployment. At the time of Brezhnev's death in November 1982 the Soviet Union had already deployed 325 SS-20 launchers, each with rapid re-fire capability carrying three highly accurate MIRVed warheads. This meant that they had roughly 2,000 nuclear warheads which could reach any point in Western Europe if fired from behind the Urals. Military intelligence reported that about one-third of these missiles were aimed at China and Japan, while two-thirds were either targeted directly on Europe or were in a swing position, and since the SS-20s are highly mobile, they could also easily be aimed westward. One must assume, and that is being conservative, that about 1,000 SS-20 warheads had been trained on Europe. At that point NATO had no comparable INF missiles in Europe that could reach Soviet territory. At Brezhnev's death, therefore, the INF count was roughly 1,000 to zero in Moscow's favour. It would also be prudent to add to this INF category the modern Soviet Backfire bomber. It was deployed in the mid-1970s, and has an operational radius of 4,200 km, as compared to

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NATO aircraft in Western Europe, all of which are of the 1960 vintage and are now obsolescent, with only a quarter of the Backfire's range and with a poor ability to penetrate Soviet air defences.

The massive Soviet military build-up had not, of course, been confined to Europe. In short order the Kremlin had launched an impressive deep-water fleet with global reach and built a long-range airlift capability which has been used, beginning in the mid-1970s, to transport Soviet-equipped Cuban troops into Angola, Ethiopia and South Yemen, supplemented by East German security forces, who set up the secret police apparatus in the various African states which have now come under Soviet control. Vietnam, acting as a Soviet proxy, also brought Cambodia under Moscow's control by means of armed conquest. And then Brezhnev directed the invasion of more than 100,000 Soviet troops into Afghanistan, starting in December 1979. It would seem fair to say that under Brezhnev's rule one observed a domestically declining Soviet society with an expanding and increasingly threatening foreign military capability, which Brezhnev did not hesitate to use in what he judged were low-risk situations.

WHEN Yuri Andropov succeeded to power upon Brezhnev's death, there was considerable continuity in general Soviet policy, although Andropov's initiatives in the domestic economic sphere and his tightening of controls over Soviet cultural life deserve special attention. These shifts of emphasis in approaching domestic problems appear to have been in large measure a function of the differing personal traits of each leader. Brezhnev, the plodding *apparatchik*, ran a slack ship and turned a blind eye towards the dry rot of corruption which had permeated Soviet society and from which high officials in both the Party and state were able to live exceedingly well, not only from officially-sanctioned prerequisites but also as a result of their being the most egregious bribe-takers. Andropov sensed that the demoralization of Soviet society had to be attacked with determination and ruthless vigour, and he appeared to have the credentials to do so. By all appearances he also possessed a wily intelligence which could command respect in his handling of difficult situations.

Andropov's first prominent role on the world scene demonstrated these traits when as Soviet ambassador to Hungary, from 1954 through the suppression of the 1956 Hungarian rebellion, he displayed considerable political skill. Any Soviet ambassador to an East European state, of course, is not an ambassador in the conventional sense of the word, but rather acts, along with the concealed KGB station chief, as the conduit for passing Kremlin orders along to the national Party leadership of the country in question.

For those who might have forgotten Andropov's part in the tumultuous events of Hungary, the outline of this little story is worth retelling. When the Soviet army invaded Hungary on 24 October 1956, it did so to support a Hungarian communist regime that was in a state of collapse.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

What then happened, to the surprise of the world, was that the Hungarian Freedom Fighters fought the Soviet army to a standstill. On 28 October, Andropov, as the chief Soviet representative in Hungary, agreed to a ceasefire and promised the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Budapest. This promise was elaborated in a Soviet Declaration of 30 October, which appeared to confirm the pledge to withdraw Soviet troops from all of Hungary. What, in fact, happened when Politburo members Anastas Mikoyan and Mikhail Suslov flew into Budapest from Moscow to consult with Andropov for the second time within a week was agreement upon a counter-plan, put into effect on 1 November, for the massive re-entry of Soviet troops into Budapest. Andropov tried to conceal this operation by creating confusion and deception. On 2 November, Andropov protested to Hungarian Prime Minister Imre Nagy that bands of Hungarians were raging around the Soviet embassy and that if the Hungarian military command did nothing about it, Andropov would be obliged to call in Soviet troops. Nagy immediately contacted his military commander in Budapest, General Bela Kiraly, who rushed to the Soviet embassy so as to " restore order " only to find that all of the surrounding streets were empty. When Kiraly pointed out this deception, Andropov replied that there had been Soviet reports of trouble, but now they had stopped. Whereupon Andropov reaffirmed Soviet intentions to remove Soviet troops from Hungary, and told General Kiraly to confirm this promise by immediately calling Prime Minister Nagy with the telephone on Andropov's desk. As Kiraly, who was the highest-ranking Hungarian military leader to escape to the West, recalled this occasion, he used Andropov's direct line to Nagy, reported the absence of any disturbance, and then informed Andropov that Nagy was willing to commence negotiations about the evacuation of Soviet troops at once. On 3 November Andropov intensified his consultations with Nagy and late that night provided a Hungarian military delegation, headed by Nagy's Defence Minister, General Pal Maleter, with safe conduct passes that would entitle it to special protection normally granted to such missions under international law, in order that the Hungarians could safely travel to the Soviet military headquarters at Csepal Island, just outside Budapest. There, Maleter and his aides were again assured that they could commence serious negotiations with the Soviet military command for the withdrawal of its troops from Hungary. Several hours after the discussions were under way, KGB head General Ivan Serov burst into the room and took the Hungarian delegation prisoner. On 4 November the second, full-scale Soviet armed invasion of Hungary began. General Maleter and his aides were held captive for some 19 months, tried in secret and then executed. A similar fate also befell Prime Minister Nagy and a group of his associates, who on 4 November fled to the Yugoslav embassy in Budapest where they had been granted political asylum. The new Hungarian Prime Minister Janos Kadar, who was only held in office by virtue of the Soviet army, pledged in writing on 21 November that Nagy and his entourage could have safe passage back to their homes.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

When they boarded a bus the next day a Soviet officer ordered them driven to a nearby airport where they were flown to a Soviet controlled destination. The end of the drama came in June 1958, when the new Hungarian puppet regime announced that Maleter, Nagy and a number of their followers had been shot to death. To what extent did Andropov, who had left Hungary in March 1957, share responsibility for these brutal acts? As a reward for the skill and ruthless duplicity which he had demonstrated during the 1956 upheaval in Hungary, Andropov was promoted to head the Party's department of the Central Committee which was responsible for Soviet relations with all ruling communist parties. As such Andropov was effectively in charge of the Soviet empire in Eastern Europe, and the 1958 executions could scarcely have taken place without his having had a direct hand in the matter.[38]

THEN in 1967 Andropov was made head of the KGB. When Khrushchev was deposed in 1964 the Soviet dissident movement was a thriving cottage industry. When Brezhnev died in 1982, the dissident movement had been effectively suppressed, largely through the skilful and systematic use of the secret police under Andropov. He avoided the counter-productive excesses of massive terror, but devised more subtle and pervasive means of political repression. It was Andropov who exiled Solzhenitsyn and removed Sakharov from Moscow to Gorky, where he was cut off from the outside world and constantly harrassed and physically abused. For lesser-known dissidents who could not attract world attention, Andropov perfected the use of insane asylums and psychiatric hospitals. The headstone, or perhaps tombstone, to the dissident movement was set in place shortly before Brezhnev's death with the announcement of the dissolution of the Soviet Helsinki watch group, which tried to induce the Soviet regime to honour the human rights committments it had undertaken at Helsinki in 1975.

In May 1982, six months before Brezhnev died, Andropov wisely resigned as KGB head, in order to make himself eligible for Brezhnev's job. This proved to be a correct calculation. The succession struggle had been decided during the final months of Brezhnev's tenure, when it was apparent that he was gravely ill and would not be likely to remain as Party leader.

When Andropov was elected General Secretary of the Party immediately after Brezhnev's death, he appeared as a vigorous, intelligent, wily and ruthless leader who was capable of taking charge and yet able to

[38] Ferenc A. Vali, *Rift and Revolt in Hungary* (Cambridge, Mass, 1961), pp. 359–77 and footnotes 37–39, pp. 560–61; Arnold Beichman and Mikhail S. Bernstam, *Andropov* (New York, 1983), pp. 136–37, 142–62. Andropov's role during the Hungarian upheaval was subsequently summed up by the then Hungarian Deputy Foreign Minister Gyorgy Heltai. There was no doubt that Soviet high policy had been formulated in the Kremlin and was transmitted personally to Andropov by the two emergency visits to Budapest on the part of Mikoyan and Suslov. But beyond these general policy decisions, Heltai recalled: " I'm sure that he had an absolutely free hand to deal with the revolutionaries, so the reign of terror in Hungary was the reign of Yuri Andropov." Andropov " was the ultimate power who decided who and how many people should be executed." (BBC interview quoted in R. W. Apple, Jr., " Some Insights Into Andropov Gleaned from Budapest Role," *New York Times*, 28 Dec. 1982.)

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

make nuanced decisions. This stood in sharp contrast to Brezhnev, the plodder, who had in his declining years increasingly turned over many top-level day-to-day decisions to his colleagues, who jointly grasped the helm of a rudderless ship.

ANDROPOV'S first campaign reflected his police mentality, namely to launch an across-the-board effort to arrest and punish those who violated Soviet labour discipline whether through alcoholism that had reached epidemic proportions, or as a result of widespread absenteeism, feather-bedding or negligence on the job, all of which resulted in very low levels of labour productivity. The Soviet press, which had previously reported cases of corruption only sporadically, was now ordered to fill its columns with evidence of the pervasive corruption of all aspects of Soviet life for all the world to see. This energetic assault on the seamier side of Soviet society began in late December 1982, and remained at a high level of intensity for almost three months, or until the early spring of 1983, when it noticeably began to recede, although it was by no means discontinued. In retrospect this burst of activity roughly coincided with the brief remaining period of Andropov's good health. Until the day Andropov died the Kremlin systematically lied to the world about the condition of his health, but the detailed medical bulletin issued after his death revealed that Andropov suffered not only from diabetes and cardiovascular problems, but that his kidneys had also stopped functioning in February 1983 so that thereafter he had to rely upon a dialysis machine.[39]

One can speculate as to whether Andropov would have been able to continue his crackdown on idlers and law breakers more actively and forcefully if his health had not deteriorated. One might also ask the question, however, as to how long Andropov might have successfully prolonged this intensive campaign in any event, without provoking a broadly-based counter-reaction? We are not talking here about dissidents who challenged the system on ideological grounds and whom Andropov persecuted even more severely as head of the Party than he had done when he was head of the KGB. Rather, we are concerned with the non-ideological challenges to authority that arose from the ordinary circumstances of daily life. Granted his broken health abbreviated what otherwise might have been a somewhat longer period of stern discipline, but even at the height of Andropov's crackdown against drunks and bribe-takers, could the quality of life in the Soviet Union be compared to the Stalinist reign of terror during the great purges? No post-Stalinist leader, Andropov included, has been able or willing to exact such a fearful price to make the Soviet people conform to his wishes.

It is commonly assumed that Andropov inherited a gigantic police state which he simply perpetuated by tougher methods. It would be more accurate to say that Andropov inherited a gigantic, *corrupt*, police state

[39] *Pravda*, 11 Feb. 1984.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in which non-ideological crimes were widely tolerated in practice, even though they were condemned in rhetoric. The patterns of corruption and disregard of the law had become so pervasive in Soviet life that no sudden burst of repression could wipe them out. Andropov frankly acknowledged that the rot of corrupt practices extended from the very top to the bottom of society, when he said that his campaign against breaches of Party, state and labour discipline applied to everyone, "beginning with ministers."[40] But how can the privileged élite of Soviet society who comprise the *nomenklatura* be held accountable for their acts, when by definition members of the *nomenklatura* are for all practical purposes considered to be above the law?

THE ample literature on Soviet corruption[41] makes evident that if some high officials are occasionally found guilty of wrong-doings they are often only given a suspended sentence and then transferred to another position without loss of pay or privilege. If punishment is meted out, it generally falls upon some lower-level official who can serve as a convenient scapegoat. The literature also reports the infrequent but recurring phenomonon of a neophyte who, out of considerations of honesty and idealism, takes the constant campaigns against corruption seriously and then attempts to report all breaches of labour discipline and manifestations of corrupt practices to higher authorities. The invariable reaction to such reports is ostracism by his fellow workers, who do not wish to abandon their feather-bedding ways and work harder, and a quiet but menacing reprimand by his superiors who do not want to endanger the receipt of bribes and special privileges that such honest reporting would expose. In short, the societal pressures of a corrupt system are more likely to squelch the isolated well-meaning individual than the isolated individual is likely to be able to buck the system and eliminate corrupt practices.

Basically we are confronted here with the age-old question: *quis custodiet ipsos custodios* (who shall guard the guardians)? The ruling Soviet élite, who are not held accountable to any other higher, or even equally powerful, independent body, really has no incentive to refashion its basic patterns of governance which makes it the principal recipient of privilege, some of which comes in the form of bribery and corruption.

There are also institutionalized incentives to cheat on the part of lower-level officials. Part of the swollen bureaucracy's duties are devoted to verifying the accounts of various state enterprises and institutions. These bureaucrats frequently have good reason to retain their jobs, in part because they are recipients of bribes that are required to falsify reports of plant operations and even to attest to the production of quota filling goods which have simply not been produced. Thus the bureaucrats, who are presumably put in place to prevent falsification of reports and abuses of state property, are frequently responsible for a system of institutional-

[40] Ibid. 1 Feb. 1983.
[41] See footnote 6, above.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ized cheating of which they are important beneficiaries and which they therefore have a vested interest to perpetuate.

Finally we come to the lowly worker and peasant who is told to fulfil the state plan which has been decreed from above without his participation. The worker and peasant does not consider this " his plan " which he has an interest in making a success. Rather it is viewed as an alien project with which he cannot identify. This sense of alienation promotes the widespread practice of theft of all forms of *state* property and it is generally condoned by the ordinary worker without being considered immoral. In sharp contrast, theft of another's *personal* property is almost universally condemned as immoral. This widely reported distinction is a barometer of the alienation of the working class from the Soviet state, which according to Marx is a phenomenon that could only occur under capitalism.

ANDROPOV nevertheless persevered in the pursuit of his anti-corruption campaign, reinforced by detailed legislation that increased penalties for violating labour discipline. These measures which rested upon coercion were supplemented by the expansion of material rewards for improvements in labour productivity. This programme, issued as a joint decree by the Party's Central Committee and the state's Council of Ministers in July 1983, provided for an experiment, that was to start in 1984, for granting increased rights to enterprises in five selected industrial ministries to be better able to reward deserving workers. This was supposed to be achieved by guaranteeing that part of the money obtained from more productive labour could remain with the enterprise rather than being distributed to other plants or higher-level organizations. Enterprises were also given greater latitude in related matters such as the introduction of labour-saving technology and the reinvestment of profits.[42]

The limited scope of this experiment was typical of the caution Soviet planners exhibit when tinkering with their economic system. Piecemeal reforms are difficult to maintain when limited to a few industries that are still tied to the rest of the economy which operates on quite different principles. Past experience has also shown that when things go awry central planning and ministry officials do not hesitate to intervene, despite their instructions to refrain from doing so.[43]

When Andropov discussed these proposed economic reforms he clearly revealed his ambivalence about their scope and pace. On the one hand he complained that in the past frequently " we resorted to half measures and could not overcome the accumulated inertia sufficiently fast." Later in the same speech Andropov added: " Of course, comrades, in an economy of such dimensions and complexity as ours, one must take

[42] *Pravda* and *Izvestiya*, 26 July, 1983. The joint resolution detailing the measures to increase labour discipline were published in *Pravda* and *Izvestiya*, 7 Aug. 1983.

[43] Marshall I. Goldman, *USSR in Crisis: The Failure of an Economic System* (New York, 1983), pp. 50–51.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

extreme care. Here more than anywhere the saying is true that one should measure seven times and cut once."[44]

Some foreign observers were quick to conclude that the provisions in the reforms that gave greater autonomy to plant managers meant that the Soviet leadership intended to downgrade the importance of central planning. Closer examination showed that what the Kremlin had in mind was an effort to increase economic growth almost exclusively through increasing labour productivity, whether this resulted from greater discipline over the labour force or from greater material rewards to the workers, which would be dispensed at the local level.[45] The principal aim, however, was to be able to fulfil the goals of the central planners, whose residue of powers would remain untouched. As Nikolai Baibakov, chairman of the State Planning Committee explained, there would be less middle-level bureaucracy involved so as to provide for better coordination between central planners and local production units. " In taking steps to expand the rights of enterprises we are *not* setting ourselves the task of weakening the centralized management of the economy. On the contrary, we are taking steps to improve centralized management and to enhance its scientific character and effectiveness."[46] This policy prescription was fully in line with Andropov's remarks on the meaning of Marxism, which he made upon coming to power and published in the Party's principal theoretical journal, *Kommunist* (No. 3, 1983). There he frankly admitted the grave difficulties in operating the Soviet economic system and called for " the invigoration and ever wider use of local initiative," while adding that this must not " lean towards anarcho-syndicalism . . . democracy without discipline." The " proven " principle of democratic centralism must prevail since this " makes it possible to combine successfully the free creativity of the masses with the advantages of a single system of scientific guidance, planning and management."

BUT could the Soviet economy be saved just by trying to raise labour productivity and by strengthening central planning? A number of Soviet academics at one of the country's most prominent centres for economic research, the Institute of Economics and Organization of Industrial Production in Novosibirsk, thought differently. The Institute's director, Academician Abel Aganbegyan, arranged for a symposium to review the maladies of the Soviet economy,[47] while one of the most eminent and free-thinking of the

[44] *Pravda*, 16 Aug. 1983.

[45] Gosplan chairman Nikolai Baibakov elaborated: " Through labour productivity growth we plan to achieve 97 per cent of the total growth in industrial output, construction and assembly work, while the entire growth in agriculture and railway transport must be achieved through higher labour productivity." Quoted in *Soviet Labour Review* (London), Vol. 1, No. 5, Feb. 1984, p. 3

[46] *Izvestiya*, 18 Aug. 1983

[47] *Ekonomika i organizatsiya promyshlennogo proizvodstva*, No. 8, Aug. 1983. Substantial abstracts of this discussion are conveniently translated in *The Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, Vol. 35, No. 48, 28 Dec. 1983. Aganbegyan's journal is designed primarily for economists and has a limited circulation. In addition, however, he managed to get an article published in *Pravda*, 1 Aug. 1983, where he complained about centralized planning, although his remarks were confined to ministerial inefficiency in the energy sector.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Institute's economists, Professor Tatyana Zaslavskaya, wrote a 30-page secret report that was quietly circulated in April. When Andropov's official economic decrees were published in July-August, the Zaslavskaya report was also leaked to Western correspondents, so that it might avoid the fate of disappearing without a trace.[48] It is an intriguing, frank and important document that has now been analysed by Western economists[49] Since it bluntly addresses the fundamental problems of the Soviet economy and the political power structure upon which it rests, some of its principal conclusions merit brief consideration.

The report did not totally disavow all central planning and controls, since it anticipated that the state would still regulate the key aspects of economic and social activity. But within this general framework there should be substantial decentralization of economic planning and greater managerial and operational independence. Today's problems arose from " a high level of centralization in economic decisions, the highly regulated character of production planning, based on direct indicators, the weak development of market relations . . . the centralization of allocation of supplies of materials and technology to enterprises, the centralized regulation of all forms of material incentives for labour, the prevalence of the branch over the territorial principle of management, lack of departmental liaison in the management of the economy by branch and sub-branch," as well as the limited authority and limited liability of enterprises that prevented them from being responsible for their economic performance. The cumulative effect of this system is that it has produced " low labour and production-discipline, an indifferent attitude to the work performed and its low quality, social passivity . . . and a rather low level of moral discipline " which has fostered " so-called ' touts,' the rampant spread of various ' shady ' deals made at public expense, the development of illegal output, of irregular registrations, of procuring wages which are not dependent on the results of labour."

The report acknowledged that a price had to be paid for such fundamental reforms—and this of course was the rub—since such changes would mean " a substantial narrowing and simplification in responsibilities for workers in departmental ministries and their organs," with just as " significant a reduction in their rights, in their economic influence . . ." In addition many executives and workers would likely resist assuming broader responsibilities and more intensive labour, while many bureaucrats " who at present occupy numerous ' cosy niches ' with . . . thoroughly agreeable salaries " would be loath to abandon their jobs that had only poorly defined duties.[50] In short, one would have to anticipate an

[48] Extended accounts of the Zaslavskaya report were printed in *The Washington Post*, on 3 Aug., and in *The New York Times* on 5 Aug. 1983. The full text with a commentary by Philip Hanson was published in *Survey*, Vol. 28, No. 1, Spring 1984, pp. 83–108.

[49] In addition to the Hanson commentary, see also Leonard Silk, " Andropov's Economic Dilemma," *The New York Times Magazine*, 9 Oct. 1983, pp. 51ff., and Alec Nove, " Whither the Soviet Economy? " in *The Washington Quarterly*, Spring 1984, pp. 89–99.

[50] Excerpts from the Zaslavskaya text, *Survey*, Vol. 28, No. 1, Spring 1984, pp. 88–108.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

across-the-board determined struggle against vested bureaucratic interests, both in the Party and state apparatus.

The Soviet leadership, which would indeed have much to lose, cannot admit, in Alec Nove's words, that the existing Soviet system requires the central planners " to perform an inherently unperformable task." They cannot admit that a modern complex economy like that of the Soviet Union, simply " cannot be controlled effectively from the center."[51]

ANDROPOV'S attempted reforms can only be properly understood if they are set within the context of the continued efforts to improve economic performance in the entire post-Stalinist period. The most ambitious reforms, conceived in the mid-1960s by the economist Evsei Liberman and which apparently enjoyed the political patronage of Aleksei Kosygin, were considerably more daring in terms of granting greater authority to plant managers and placing greater reliance upon various market mechanisms. Yet they ended in almost total failure, due to the piecemeal fashion in which they were introduced, as well as the indifferent, if not hostile, reaction they provoked from ministries and central planners, whose economic decision-making powers were diminished and, as a by-product, whose political status and power were also threatened.

Finally, the Kosygin reforms coincided with the Prague Spring of 1968, when the Dubček reformers in Czechoslovakia introduced similar, only much more far-reaching, economic reforms as part of a programme of political liberalization, which began with the abolition of censorship and envisioned legalizing democracy within the Party through the toleration of a " loyal opposition." A Congress of the Czechoslovak Communist Party, which had been scheduled for early September 1968, was intended to sanction these changes and to fill the Party leadership with advocates of Dubček's programme. The imminence of this event was surely one of the most important factors in triggering the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia on the night of 20–21 August.[52]

The Prague Spring created such fear of genuine economic reform in the Soviet Union during the remainder of the Brezhnev era that subsequent economic reform programmes were either shelved or were advanced with extreme caution. They were so restricted in the challenge that they presented to the power of central planners and especially to the leading role of the Communist Party, that they amounted, in the phrase of one Western scholar, to putting the Soviet economy on a "treadmill " of reforms that produced much activity but virtually no forward motion.[53]

[51] Nove, op. cit. p. 91.

[52] For the proceedings of the Czechoslovak Party Congress, which was assembled in haste on 22 August 1968 in defiance of Soviet orders, see Jiri Pelikan (ed.), *The Secret Vysocany Congress* (London, 1969).

[53] On the successive Soviet economic reforms, see the following articles by Gertrude E. Schroeder: " Soviet Economic Reforms at an Impasse," in *Problems of Communism*, Vol. 20, No. 4, July–Aug. 1971, pp. 36–46; " Recent Developments in Soviet Planning and Incentives," in *Soviet Economic Prospects for the Seventies*, Joint Economic Committee, Congress of the United States (Washington, DC, 1973), pp. 11–38; *Organization and Management in the Soviet Economy: The Ceaseless Search for*

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The modest reforms of the brief Andropov period were also just more futile steps on the same treadmill, since his experimentation in economics left untouched the stultifying political straightjacket which prevented the development of a more rational economic system. Chernenko's pledges to continue Andropov's economic reforms based on the leading role of the Party can only bring more of the same, especially since Chernenko's concern during his whole adult life has been with trying to perfect the Party apparatus.

One frequently hears the prediction that after Chernenko's demise, a younger, more intelligent, better educated successor like Mikhail Gorbachev will be likely to undertake far-reaching reforms that will be able to revitalize Soviet society. Granted Gorbachev is 20 years younger, more intelligent and better educated than Chernenko and is more likely to engage in bolder reforms, but he has also been reared in the same political culture that sanctifies the leading role of the Party. Will his reforms be so far-reaching as to disavow this central tenet of the Soviet political system? This reverts to the question asked at the outset of this article: to what extent can the future Soviet leadership successfully confront the basic problems that are inherent in the very nature of the Soviet system?

THE answer to this question rests in large measure upon what happens to the role of the Party in Soviet society. Over time the Party's role has changed enormously in the evolution of the Soviet system. During the initial chaotic period of the seizure of power the Party was doubtless the most effective single agency for guiding the organization and mobilization of Soviet society. After the rigours of War Communism the Party, along with other Soviet organs, somewhat relaxed its grip during the NEP period of the mid-1920s. With the launching of the first five-year plan in 1928, the Party again became a more active agent in guiding the cruel processes of forced-pace industrialization and the collectivization of agriculture. When Stalin unleashed the great purges of the 1930s, the Party, like all other organizations in Soviet society, was ultimately reduced to an agent of Stalin's personal rule.

In the post-Stalinist period Khrushchev attempted to revise the Party as the leading organ in Soviet society, along with a reinvigoration of ideology which could legitimize the Party's monopoly of power, by virtue of its being the guardian of " correct thought." But Khrushchev wanted to make the rationale for the Party's existence more meaningful and its guidance of society more precise. In November 1962 he split the entire Party apparatus into two functional groups, one with power over agriculture, the other over industry. The result was that the operational lines of jurisdiction between the Party and state bureaucracies became even more blurred and the administration of the economy became even

Panaceas, National Foreign Assessment Centre Research Paper ER 77–10769 (Washington, DC, Dec. 1977); " The Soviet Economy on a Treadmill of ' Reforms,' " in *Soviet Economy in a Time of Change*, Vol. 1, pp. 312–40; " Soviet Economic 'Reform ' Decrees: More Steps on the Treadmill," in *Soviet Economy in the 1980s*, Part 1, pp. 65–88.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

more confused. One of the first acts of Khrushchev's successors was to annul this arrangement and restore the Party to its prior unity. But making the Party whole again still did not resolve its search for a useful mission.

It became increasingly clear during the Brezhnev era that the Party monopolized privilege which it dispensed in order to maintain itself in power, but otherwise served no genuinely useful purpose. The result, Aaron Wildavsky concludes, is that

> the Communist Party is a parasite upon society, performing no socially useful labor. It serves only to oversee and alter the priorities of those who possess greater knowledge, either because they are better trained or because they are closer to the situation about which action is being taken. Its efforts to gain information about society are distorted . . . by the strong incentives to tell the polity only what it wishes to hear. Hence the multiplicity of controllers to ascertain the truth, which only independent, competent, and plural sources of information can approximate.

But plural centres of power cannot be tolerated and they are extinguished by the ultimate weapon, namely the secret police, " which is a parasite upon a parasite because it need not exist at all were it not for the Communist Party's insistence on rule from a single center. Thus the Soviet Union has two states within a state, the Party living off the people and the secret police living off the Party."[54]

CAN the Party perhaps stave off its obsolesence by relying upon an infusion of high technology that has flowed from the computer age? Starting in 1955 the Soviet press began to reveal an ever increasing interest in much of the technology that was associated with the fledgling development of computers. Dubbed " the scientific-technical revolution " (STR), the Soviet leadership gave it a central place in plans for understanding the present era and for anticipating changes that could help guide the future.[55]

By 1970 it was commonplace for Soviet scientists and political leaders to boast that computers would be peculiarly suited to integrate and direct all of the myriad, separate transactions of a huge, centrally planned economy into a harmonious whole, unlike capitalist economies which were unfortunately dominated by the economic anarchy of the free market-place. Chairman of the Council of Ministers Aleksei Kosygin, for example, told the 24th Party Congress in 1971:

> Thanks to the advantages of the socialist economic system, which makes it possible to manage economic and social processes at the level of the country as a whole, extensive use of computer technology

[54] Aaron Wildavsky, " The Soviet System," in Aaron Wildavsky (ed.), *Beyond Containment* (San Francisco, 1983), pp. 32–33.

[55] Julian Cooper, " The Scientific and Technical Revolution in Soviet Theory," in Frederic J. Fleron, Jr. (ed.), *Technology and Communist Culture* (New York, 1977), pp. 146–79.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> will help to strengthen the basis of our plans and to find the optimal solution for them.[56]

The Soviet assumption about the superiority of its system to tap the capabilities of computers has been proven wrong. During the 1950s the Soviet Union lagged substantially behind the advanced industrial democracies in its ability to innovate computer technology. This gap increased during the 1960s and subsequently has shown no signs of narrowing. Indeed, even today Soviet industry is still having difficulty in coping with innovations in the traditional " smoke stack " technology, and is finding it infinitely more difficult to innovate in the high technology of the computer age. The list of Soviet failings in its computer industry is very long and includes such problems as substantial delays in developing new models, the production of large numbers of competing but incompatible models, the slow production of processors which has forced the retention of obsolete models, the short supply of peripherals, the unavailability of software and the interminable delays in repairs and servicing of all equipment.[57]

When Andropov returned to the question of high technology in a speech to a Party Plenum in June 1983, he struck quite a different note from that of the preceding decade. " Unfortunately, comrades, as you all know, it is precisely the introduction of the achievements of science and technology into practice that still have not gone well in our country." He then named a number of production processes where it was necessary to introduce " the widest possible use of computers and robots." The difficulties were not simply technical in nature, Andropov admitted, since management and organizational procedures were also involved. " The State Planning Committee, the Academy of Sciences and the State Committee for Science and Technology are currently working on this. But this work must be done faster, since loss of time costs the country dearly."[58]

Were these problems really susceptible to solutions that could come from the drawing boards of central planning committees and scientific institutes? Essentially this question goes much deeper than bureaucratic tinkering, since it is political in nature. The entire Soviet system revolves around a parasitic Party apparatus that is, above all, dedicated to preserving its monopoly on privilege, and therefore cannot tolerate any meaningful deconcentration of power or decentralization of decision-making to the level where policy can most rationally be made. Similarly, the Soviet obsession with secrecy makes sense in terms of its political system, since only those at the top have a full picture of what is going on and can thereby retain the power of control and intitiative.[59]

[56] Quoted by Martin Cave, " Innovation Aspects of the Management Automation Program in the Soviet Union," in Ronald Amann and Julian Cooper (eds.), *Industrial Innovation in the Soviet Union* (New Haven and London, 1982), p. 241.

[57] Ibid. pp. 231–33.

[58] *Pravda* and *Izvestiya*, 16 June 1983.

[59] For a thoughtful essay on the interaction between the Soviet political system and computer

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

We have so far considered the initial phase of computer technology which emphasized large main-frame computers that could, at least in theory, be adapted to centralized functions by large institutions. The advanced industrial democracies are now plunging into a second computer revolution, whose potential is only beginning to be appreciated, which involves the dispersion of this technology into millions of decentralized work stations and personal home computers that not only can plug into centralized data banks, but also create a horizontal communications network, where microcomputers can talk with each other. If the Soviet political system has proven that it has had great difficulty in using centralized computers, imagine how the Soviet leadership would react to proposals for millions of its citizens to be able to have access to enormous amounts of all sorts of reliable data, which the Soviet regime does not even make available to its own officials! And if the present scarcity of Xerox-type copiers in the Soviet Union can be explained in part by KGB suspicion that they are potentially dangerous devices which could disseminate subversive ideas, how would a police state mentality view the unrestrained flow of information and ideas among millions of people using these decentralized microcomputers?

In the advanced industrial democracies, which do not fear but welcome the rapid flow of essential information down to the levels that can best benefit from it, the second computer revolution has given these societies a dynamic character that can only widen the already large gap between them and a closed, Soviet society, where the Party continues to insist upon monopolizing power and exercising a leading role in all transactions. If one could fantasize a little, suppose that Andropov had told his Party Plenum: " Unfortunately, comrades, if we are to be brutally frank, we must admit that the reason why the introduction of the achievements of science and technology into practice has still not gone well in our country is because the very nature of our political power structure makes this impossible. . . ."

A NUMBER of Western students of Soviet society over the past several decades have argued that an economically mature Soviet Union must inevitably recognize this fact and consequently introduce reforms in its political system, so that the Soviet leadership can deal adequately with the challenges facing any modern industrial society. Knowledge must devolve upon the technical experts who can generate and interpret the data required to solve society's problems. Since knowledge is power, the diffusion of knowledge would bring in its wake a democratization of power within the Party, as well as diminishing the Party's dominant role in society. In its simplest terms, economic man would gain power at the expense of political man.

Two brief examples might illuminate the merit of this argument. In a

technology, see Erik P. Hoffmann, " Technology, Values, and Political Power in the Soviet Union: Do Computers Matter? " in Fleron (ed.), op. cit. pp. 397–436.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

1968 essay Richard Lowenthal declared that Marxist economic determinism, which had never worked in the Soviet Union, was now beginning to take hold. It was a commonplace observation that the Soviet Union was the last country in the world where one could find a demonstration of the Marxist dictum that the economic base of society determines its political superstructure. The Leninist obsession with creating a political élite for the seizure and maintenance of power, and what Stalin aptly called a " revolution from above " in the 1930s that totally reshaped the Soviet economic base by political fiat, both clearly contradicted Marxism. " Formerly," Lowenthal acknowledged, " the Communist political superstructure was concerned with forcibly transforming the system's economic and social basis, contrary to the generalizations derived by Karl Marx." However, " now, the economic and social basis of the countries under communist rule, having reached a state of development comparable to that of the modern West, is beginning to transform the political superstructure in the familiar manner described by the Marxist interpretation of history." Accordingly, Lowenthal anticipated that a gradual atrophy of communist political controls would be accompanied by liberalization and expansion of the social and economic realms. There would be " a reduction in the range of government and Party activities and an increase in the legal and social security of the average individual." The secret police apparatus would decline, while " the sphere of privacy and autonomous leisure . . . is correspondingly extended." The greater range for freedom of thought and autonomous activity would see a " development and experimentation in literature and the arts." Soviet censorship would thus be confined to " ideas liable to foster political opposition or undermine social discipline."[60]

I was always deeply suspicious of this theory and the passage of time has only confirmed this view. Why should Marxist economic determinism, which could not previously explain the functioning of the Soviet system, suddenly begin to do so? Lowenthal assumes that mature industrial economies operate by some impersonal, self-regulating mechanism, or at least that the new Soviet leadership will consist of rational economic actors. No society has purely rational economic actors, and the Soviet Union is the least likely place to find them. The Soviet leaders are reared in a political culture and hold ideological commitments which make them sensitive to any challenge to their privileged positions. The Party knows how to defend itself and is not seeking to put itself out of business, even gradually.

Ironically, Lowenthal wrote this essay in 1968 when the economic and political liberalization he anticipated was under way in the Prague Spring, which the Soviet Union found necessary to crush by force of arms. The fact that he left the essay unrevised when published several years later presumably indicates that he thought the Prague Spring, and not its

[60] Richard Lowenthal, " Development vs. Utopia in Communist Policy," in Chalmers Johnson (ed.), *Change in Communist Systems* (Stanford, CA, 1970), pp. 112–13. The essays in this collection were first presented to a 1968 Stanford workshop on the comparative study of communism.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

crushing, represented the wave of the future. To be sure, Brezhnev's Soviet Union was not just like Stalin's. But the changes that had taken place in the loosening of controls were largely a result of the degeneration of Soviet society into a state of pervasive corruption, rather than steps forward towards principles of Western liberal democracy.

DURING the 1970s Jerry Hough wrote about changes he detected in Soviet society that caused him to predict that the Soviet Union was, in fact, advancing towards Western-style democracy. " Why," Hough asked, " might one even contemplate the possibility of fairly rapid movement toward a constitutional democracy in the Soviet Union? The main reason on theoretical grounds would be the existence of a strong worldwide correlation between the level of industrial development in a country and the presence of classic democratic institutions such as competitive elections. The most industrialized countries are almost all constitutional democracies, while democratic political forms are found only infrequently in the least industrialized countries."[61] While this may not be as explicit an expression of economic determinism as Lowenthal's, nevertheless this thesis is implicit in it. Moreover, Hough takes the political consequences of the economic forces at work much farther. Elsewhere in this same work, Hough says that " the preponderance of pressure is in the direction of liberalization,"[62] that while the " Soviet Union has an authoritarian political system . . . it has a constitution and a set of Party rules that correspond in large part to Western conceptions of democracy,"[63] and that " the Soviet system is a parliamentary system of a special type."[64]

Hough did extensive research into the changes that had taken place in Soviet society during the Brezhnev era, but in the words of one critic, his analysis "fails to persuade . . . because he makes much ado about very, very little."[65] To the contention that recent Soviet developments have given birth to pluralist interest groups that are similar to those competing for power in a liberal democracy, William Odom has wisely cautioned against trying to project Western models on to an alien Soviet soil. Power under Brezhnev and Andropov was doubtless more diffused than in the Stalinist era, but such diffusion resulted from the bureaucratic decay of a formerly monolithic system, in which " conflict is less severe between

[61] Jerry F. Hough and Merle Fainsod, *How the Soviet Union is Governed* (Cambridge, Mass, 1979), p. 566. Hough not only extensively revised and enlarged but also mutilated the late Professor Fainsod's original text.

[62] Ibid. p. 570.

[63] Ibid. p. 560.

[64] Ibid. p. 544.

[65] Melvin Croan, " Soviet Politics and Political Culture," *Problems of Communism*, Vol. 27, No. 5, Sept–Oct. 1978, p. 60. Croan was reviewing Hough's book, *The Soviet Union and Social Science Theory* (Cambridge, Mass, 1977), which elaborated the same view of his other writings. See also Hough's two articles, " The Soviet System: Petrification or Pluralism? " *Problems of Communism*, Vol. 21, No. 2, Mar.–Apr. 1972, pp. 25–45, and " The Brezhnev Era," ibid. Vol. 25, No. 2, Mar.–Apr. 1976, pp. 1–17. For a rebuttal see George W. Breslauer, " Khrushchev Reconsidered," ibid. Vol. 25, No. 5, Sept.–Oct. 1976, pp. 18–33.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

institutions and incipient groups than it is between higher and lower strata in the hierarchical Soviet system."[66] Power might also be diffused when regionalism is reinforced by conflicts between different nationalities.[67] These types of " pluralism " do not herald the articulation of group interests that are familiar in Western societies nor movement towards Western parliamentary democracy. The changes in Soviet society during the Brezhnev era, or Andropov's brief reign, or the policy initiatives undertaken by Chernenko can be presented as evidence of an evolution towards parliamentary democracy only by making a travesty of the idea of parliamentary democracy.

The leader of the post-Chernenko period will doubtless place the stamp of his personality and character traits upon Soviet society, just as each previous ruler has done. But he will also have institutional loyalties, and unless his programme includes the goal of the Party committing suicide, the most likely prospect is that the heavy hand of the Party will continue to stifle the innovative and creative impulses that might otherwise bubble up from below. The Soviet civilian economy and social structure will continue, as before, to be headed towards decline and increasingly unable to meet the requirements of a modern civilized society.

IN the past the Soviet regime has tried to get around its inability to innovate by relying upon transfusions of technology from abroad, either through legal transactions or by theft. From the Soviet point of view this effort was one of the major incentives for the so-called period of *détente* of the 1970s. Here the Kremlin thought it could have the best of both worlds. It could import high technology items which it either found difficult to make or was simply incapable of innovating at home, while at the same time it could avoid dangerous, liberalizing reforms by leaving its domestic power structure intact. Even though US–Soviet relations deteriorated badly after Afghanistan, the Soviet leaders continued eagerly to cultivate and even increase economic ties with Western Europe,[68] while one of the KGB's major roles abroad remained, as before, the relentless pursuit of industrial espionage.

This apparently shrewd strategy of obtaining advanced technology without having to pay a domestic political price has only had qualified success. The reasons, again, are at bottom political: the same systemic weaknesses which have impeded domestic innovation have also limited success in assimilating imported products and skills.

Careful studies on the importation of Western technology into the Soviet civilian economy have consistently revealed a number of serious

[66] William E. Odom, " Choice and Change in Soviet Politics," in *Problems of Communism*, Vol. 32, No. 3, May–June 1983, p. 19.

[67] Ibid. p. 9. See also Odom's earlier thoughtful essay " A Dissenting View on the Group Approach to Soviet Politics," in *World Politics*, Vol. 28, No. 4, July 1976, pp. 542–67.

[68] Theodore Shabad, " Soviet Increases Trade with Western Europe," *International Herald Tribune*, 4 April 1984.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

problems.[69] Soviet negotiations for the purchase of such technology characteristically involve long delays due to bureaucratic inefficiencies and poor project management, taking generally between two and three times longer than a similar transaction in the West. Such time-lags are often of critical importance in the diffusion of continuously evolving technologies. Strict Soviet controls over contacts between its own citizens and foreigners choke off much technology transfer that is otherwise facilitated by the extensive movement of technologists and managers in the West. Moreover, since " most technical research in the USSR is not published . . . direct personal contacts are crucial."[70]

The administrative separation between the foreign trade agency that negotiates a contract and the enterprise for which the technology is intended can both delay and distort the relevant flow of information. Rigid centralized planning and administration not only limits the pace at which innovations can be introduced, but it also restricts the diffusion of such imported technology to other parts of the economy.

Once the imported machinery is on site, delays in construction are frequent and workers' skills are generally found to be low by Western standards. On average, the time taken from inquiry to completion of turnkey projects is three-and-a-half to four times longer than a similar project undertaken in the West. After start-up the imported technology is inefficiently used and manning levels are often found to be from 50 per cent to 70 per cent higher than in comparable plants in the West. Studies have shown that the final impact of the imported technology was also limited since, in most cases, " the Soviets had not subsequently acquired the capability to replicate the plant they had imported."[71]

Behind all the specific difficulties in the absorption of foreign technology Philip Hanson perceives two fundamental systemic reasons: " First, initiative is restricted to relatively few persons—in the import of technology as in other activities. Second, competitive pressures and incentives are lacking but discipline and authority are relatively strong," and this breeds caution and delays in decision-making so as to be able to avoid punishment for possible failures.[72] Again the Soviet civilian economy is prisoner to its political system.

THUS far we have considered the prospects, or more precisely the lack of prospects, for the Soviet civilian economy. Is the

[69] See, for example, John P. Hardt and George D. Holliday, " Technology Transfer and Change in the Soviet Economic System," in Fleron (ed.), op. cit. pp. 183–223; Philip Hanson, " The Impact of Western Technology," in Archie Brown and Michael Kaser (eds.), *The Soviet Union Since the Fall of Khrushchev*, 2nd ed. (London, 1978), pp. 19–49; Philip Hanson and Malcolm R. Hill, " Soviet Assimilation of Western Technology," in *Soviet Economy in a Time of Change*, Vol. 2, pp. 582–604; Philip Hanson, *Trade and Technology in Soviet-Western Relations* (New York, 1981); Martin C. Spechler, " Soviet Policy Towards Technological Change Since 1975," in *Soviet Economy in the 1980s*, Part I, pp. 89–101; George D. Holliday, " Western Technology Transfer to the Soviet Union: Problems of Assimilation and Impact on Soviet Exports," in ibid. pp. 514–30; Philip Hanson, " The Soviet System as a Recipient of Foreign Technology," in Amann and Cooper (eds.), op. cit. pp. 415–52.

[70] Spechler, " Soviet Policy," in op. cit. p. 98.

[71] Hanson, " The Soviet System," in Amann and Cooper (eds.), op. cit. p. 444.

[72] Ibid. p. 449.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Soviet military economy in comparable difficulty? If so, the non-Soviet world can breathe more easily. Unfortunately, there is no room for such complacency.

While many of the systemic problems with the civilian economy doubtless carry over to the military sector, there would, on balance, seem to be more differences than similarities. The Soviet military economy is marked by a number of important, special conditions.

Since it is the highest priority sector, the military has privileged access to scarce resources. Priority status would not, by itself, assure results, however, without the strong political commitment of the Soviet leadership. The Party élite has consistently demonstrated an intense interest in the success of military projects and has been willing to issue frequent commands to have its priorities obeyed. Such attention also permits a speed of decision-making that is totally uncharacteristic of the civilian economy.

Defence ministries are freed of a number of the usual bureaucratic constraints. They can pursue a policy of economic autarchy by creating supplier industries under their own direct control, thereby avoiding reliance on outside suppliers which might not be able to meet delivery schedules or quality requirements. Military products are also subject to a much higher standard of technical inspection for quality. The enterprises that make weapons also have direct ties with their military consumers, and this oversight not only ensures quality control, but makes experimentation and innovation in the research-production cycle more feasible. Instead of being tied to the usual rigid production targets set by central planners in the civilian economy, many weapons factories only have general target plans, from which they are expected to deviate when they receive specific orders to try new methods on the advice of their military customers. There are also experimental factories that are not given production targets but are encouraged to innovate in order to improve upon their military products.

The Ministry of Defence also has its own network of research institutes, design bureaux and higher educational bodies, which help the armed forces to decide on operational requirements, monitor weapons development, test prototypes and use the delivered equipment. The Soviet Air Force, in particular, has a number of its own research laboratories and institutes as well as relatively autonomous, experimental design bureaux, which compete for contracts by each producing its own designs and often building prototypes, much as is done in the US. This domestic aspect of competition is reinforced by the scrutiny of external competition that results from constant comparison with NATO's technological innovations, which Soviet models are supposed to counter. In sharp contrast, the Soviet civilian economy has neither domestic competition nor external competition, since Soviet products are not required to match the level of foreign civilian products.[73] Thus two gaps are

[73] David Holloway, " Innovation in the Defense Sector," in Amann and Cooper (eds.), op. cit. pp. 276–367.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

simultaneously opening ever wider: that between the Soviet and Western civilian economies, and between the Soviet civilian and military sectors.

FINALLY, let us look briefly at the impact that the Soviet military sector and Soviet military policy continue to have on the outside world. The most striking aspect of the military sector is the continuity that Brezhnev's successors have carried forward from the Brezhnev era. While this may be demonstrated by examples in various parts of the world, perhaps it will suffice to pick up the thread of Soviet nuclear policy towards the two military blocs that confront each other in the centre of Europe.

At the time of Brezhnev's death it will be recalled that in the deployment of intermediate-range nuclear force (INF) warheads, Moscow had an advantage, by a conservative count, of almost 1,000 to zero. In December 1979 NATO adopted its " dual track " decision to begin deployment of Pershing II and ground launched cruise missiles starting in December 1983, on the condition that the INF negotiations with the Russians at Geneva failed to produce an agreement that would make such deployment unnecessary. Andropov intensified Brezhnev's massive propaganda campaign aimed at preventing NATO's INF deployment, regardless of the outcome of negotiations. The INF story is an excellent study of Soviet psychological warfare, backed by the reality of enormous Soviet military power, which sought to overwhelm Western efforts to reach public opinion through rational argument by a mounting wave of Soviet emotional intimidation.

The Western argument consisted of a package of interconnected ideas. The NATO INF deployment was aimed at restoring some measure of the Eurostrategic balance with a minimum credible force, which could limit a further ratcheting of the arms race. Consequently, NATO's INF missiles only had single warheads, compared to the SS-20's triple, MIRVed, warheads. NATO set itself the goal of deploying a total of 572 INF missiles over a five-year period. By the spring of 1984, or only a few months after NATO's deployment had begun, the Soviet Union had already deployed twice as many SS-20 warheads as were projected for the entire, completed NATO programme, and new SS-20 bases were still under construction.[74]

NATO's deployment involved modernizing, but not adding to its INF total, since one old weapon would be withdrawn for each new one installed. In addition, and in advance of the new programme, 1,000 American short-range nuclear warheads were unilaterally withdrawn from Europe by 1980, and a decision by the NATO Defence Ministers in the autumn of 1983 undertook a further reduction of 1,400 shorter-range nuclear warheads in Europe, for a total reduction of 2,400. This brought NATO's nuclear stockpile in Europe to its lowest level in over 20 years.[75]

[74] Statement of Richard Burt, Chairman, NATO Special Consultative Group to the Group's 15 May 1984 meeting, Brussels. *Atlantic News*, No. 1622, 17 May 1984.

[75] Final Communiqué, NATO Nuclear Planning Group, 4 April 1984, ibid. No. 1613, 7 April 1984.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

By way of contrast, while the SS-20s were designed to replace obsolete SS-4s and 5s, the Soviet Union also introduced a new generation of shorter-range nuclear weapons with the more accurate SS-21s, 22s, and 23s, and began their forward deployment in East Germany and Czechoslovakia.[76]

The range of NATO's new INF missiles was also deliberately kept short, in order to minimize their provocative effect. The fast Pershing IIs can only travel 1,800 kilometres, which prevents them from striking Moscow from West European bases, while the slower cruise missiles' range is only 2,500 kilometres. The SS-20s have a range of precisely twice that, 5,000 kilometres.[77]

ONE major aim of the NATO INF programme was to complete the chain of deterrence by connecting NATO's conventional forces on the one side with the US strategic nuclear forces on the other. It is precisely the linkage between the US INF missiles in Europe with the US-based ICBMs that should give great pause to the Soviet high command, should it be inclined to launch any kind of nuclear war. The explicit American nuclear linkage between the two sides of the Atlantic should, if one can be logical about such things, greatly reduce the likelihood of a Soviet nuclear attack on Europe. Indeed, from the Soviet point of view, a nuclear attack on Europe alone would make no sense, since Moscow could not, in these circumstances, risk leaving America's strategic nuclear retaliatory capability untouched. In short, the NATO INF programme should make West Europeans feel more, not less, secure by raising, not lowering, the nuclear threshold.

One Soviet ploy aimed at keeping any US INF missiles out of Europe consisted of trying to count the French and British nuclear forces as the counterpart to the SS-20s. During the SALT negotiations Moscow had insisted upon counting these two European national deterrents as strategic forces; now they were to be counted again in the INF category. All parties on the Western side firmly rejected this Soviet effort because the US INF missiles did not serve the same function as the French and British nuclear forces. The latter were conceived as purely national forces of last resort, rather than designed to protect NATO Europe. Counting them in place of the US INF missiles would also have eliminated the linkage between the US nuclear missiles in Europe and those in America. Moscow was determined to break this linkage, and all NATO partners were determined to strengthen it. The Soviet campaign, if it had succeeded, would have demonstrated that the Kremlin could exercise a veto over NATO defence plans and would have deprived NATO of any future credibility. Both Moscow and the West understood that the future of NATO itself was at stake.

When the Bundestag voted on 22 November 1983 to approve

[76] Ibid. See also statement by Soviet Defence Minister Dmitri Ustinov, quoted by John F. Burns, *New York Times*, 21 May 1984.

[77] Department of Defence, *Soviet Military Power*, April 1984 ed. (Washington, DC) p. 51.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

deployment of the US INF missiles in the Federal Republic, that ensured success of the NATO plan in the three major West European states of Britain, Italy and West Germany. The Kremlin was then reduced to using one of its remaining weapons of intimidation, which it employed on 23 November by breaking off the Geneva INF negotiations.

Although the Soviet Union lost the political battle in the three major West European countries, its margin of defeat should not be exaggerated. The Kremlin's campaign had considerable impact on Western opinion in large measure because of the unequal nature of the contest. Not only were the Western societies open, while those of the Soviet bloc were closed, but the Western case rested upon a series of rational arguments which were simply too complicated and too enmeshed in the sophisticated calculations of nuclear strategy to be widely understood. The Soviet message was stark and easily grasped: escalate the arms race and threaten the destruction of Western Europe with nuclear weapons. The newly-deployed NATO missiles could only act as lightning rods for a Soviet nuclear attack which the Kremlin now threatened would be more likely than ever.

The disparity in the behaviour of Western opinion was also striking. Massive demonstrations occurred regularly in the West protesting the prospect of *proposed* deployment of NATO missiles; meanwhile the *actual* Soviet deployment of SS-20s continued unabated and almost unnoticed. There was no lack of time involved: when Chancellor Schmidt called for a redressing of the Eurostrategic balance in 1977 the Soviet Union had deployed nine SS-20s, by the time of NATO's two track decision of December 1979 about 90 had been deployed, when the Kremlin broke off INF negotiations at the end of 1983 there were 330 and by the spring of 1984 NATO intelligence had identified 378 deployed SS-20s.[78] But where were the massive demonstrations in the West each time new Soviet deployments were discovered? The bizarre difference in reactions to events in the West and East clearly demonstrated how blind fear can paralyse rational thought. Cognitive processes only function imperfectly in the best of circumstances, and can easily be frozen when caught up in a paroxysm of intimidation.

The Soviet campaign of intimidation worked best against the three small NATO nations of the Netherlands, Belgium and Denmark, precisely because these nations are small and therefore feel more easily intimidated. The Dutch, who had reneged on their December 1979 promise to deploy 48 cruise missiles, announced in June 1984 that they would cancel their deployment if the Soviet Union stopped its SS-20 deployments at 378[79]; otherwise Holland would reconsider deployment

[78] *Atlantic News*, No 1532, 10 June 1983; ibid. No. 1614, 11 April 1984; *Soviet Military Power*, p. 51. Of the 378 SS-20s deployed in the spring of 1984, 243 were targeted against NATO. Ibid. p. 51. It must be recalled that all these figures refer to SS-20 missiles in launchers, that each missile has three MIRVed warheads and that each launcher can be instantly reloaded.

[79] The final communiqué of the NATO Nuclear Planning Group of 4 April 1984 stated that while 378 SS-20 missiles had been deployed, " more bases, East and West of the Ural Mountains, are under construction." *Atlantic News*, No. 1613, 7 April 1984.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in November 1985, which would delay actual deployment until 1988. Belgium had already delayed the start of its deployment until 1985, and Denmark, which had never promised to accept any missiles, blocked a scheduled May 1984 payment of 5 million dollars to the joint infrastructure programme for INF bases.[80]

Behind all these disparate events was the common retreat of the small powers towards their traditional position of neutralism and pacifism. Several recent world wars should have taught them that neutralism was a chimera and an invitation to disaster. The fact is that Soviet intimidation has produced a revival of appeasement, which is near the surface in much of Western Europe, but is most clearly apparent in the small NATO nations.

THE Soviet Union is a superpower, not by virtue of its industrial and scientific advances that produce a high standard of living, nor by its cultural contributions, but solely by virtue of its military prowess. At the time of Andropov's death the standing armed forces of the Soviet Union were by far the largest of any country in the world. They numbered 5,050,000, which was almost 1,000,000 greater than the People's Republic of China (4,100,000, which figure included 300,000 railway troops), and nearly 3,000,000 greater than those of the United States, which had a force level of 2,136,400.[81] Soviet troops in Europe and along its Asian border are equipped with arms far greater than required for defensive purposes, and they have also achieved a long-range sea and air lift capability that can project Soviet military power, supplemented by Cuban and East European surrogates, into almost any corner of the world.

The Soviet " costs of empire," calculated largely in non-military terms, have also been rising steadily. A RAND study of the 1971–80 decade excluded the costs of all Soviet military operations in Europe and Asia, which one might consider as dedicated to the defence of the Soviet state. The sole exception here was the Soviet military occupation of Afghanistan. Beyond that the calculation included factors such as trade subsidies, export credits that probably would not be repayed, Soviet military aid, excluding hard currency military sales, economic aid, not counting repayments, and Soviet military operations of all sorts in the Third World. " In constant 1981 dollars, using official exchange rates, costs of the Soviet empire rose from about $18 billion in 1971 . . . to about $41 billion in 1980." When compared with roughly corresponding categories of US costs as a share of the respective GNPs, " the Soviet cost in dollars was more than three times the comparable US figure, and in rubles was more than eight times the US figure " over the same period.[82] While one might

[80] Ibid. No. 1621, 16 May 1984.

[81] The International Institute for Strategic Studies, *The Military Balance, 1983–84* (London, 1983), pp. 4, 14, and 84.

[82] Results of a RAND study were summarized by the dean of RAND's graduate school, Charles Wolf, Jr., in " Costs of the Soviet Empire," *Wall Street Journal*, 30 Jan. 1984.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

quibble about some adjustments that might be made to bring this study through the post-Brezhnev period, the trend lines would surely be much the same.

The long-range prospect for the Soviet Union in the post-Brezhnev era would appear to remain much as it was under Brezhnev: a society that is internally declining while it is externally expanding. This may prove to be a dangerous combination, since a society that is incapable of stopping its internal decline may attempt to cover up or distract attention from insoluble domestic problems by focusing attention on crises abroad, which can serve to unify the Soviet people behind the Soviet regime. Successes in foreign adventures will also tend to reinforce the hold of the Party over all aspects of society and make rational reforms in the Soviet system even more unlikely. While the West cannot save the Soviet system from its own internal degeneration, it can attempt to slow down the Kremlin's continuing external thrust by devising concerted policies that might make Soviet foreign adventurism unprofitable. Unless this is done, the prospect is that the worse things become at home, the worse things are likely to become for the non-Soviet world abroad.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

China's Democracy Movement: A Midwinter Spring*

Robin Munro

IN mid-November 1978, on a drab stretch of wall by a bus station in central Peking, there appeared a wall-poster expressing an idea which had been taboo in China for many a long year: Mao had made mistakes![1] This wall became, within a matter of days, the focus for an outpouring of spontaneous grass-roots debate, the site of a series of unofficial mass rallies and the birthplace of a new and flourishing Chinese *samizdat*, and it spawned a movement which was to continue as a small but highly significant presence in the political life of the nation for the next two and a half years. The galvanizing concept behind this unprecedented occurrence of political and literary self-expression, one reflecting a groundswell of popular discontent with the course taken by Chinese socialism during the previous two decades, was democracy.

The idea of democracy did not, of course, appear from nowhere, nor was it merely borrowed from the cultural treasure-chest of the West. It had a specific content and meaning for the young generation of Chinese, the " lost generation " of the Cultural Revolution who were its most ardent advocates. It comprised a curious combination of the widespread aspiration towards " extensive democracy " which the Cultural Revolution had provoked, and the subsequent popular resolve to ensure that the actual political product of that period—the bleak, authoritarian and harshly anti-intellectual order of the " Gang of Four "—would never again be permitted to arise.

Mass demonstrations against that order in Tian An Men Square on 5 April 1976, brutally suppressed at the time and officially condemned as counter-revolutionary until one week before the birth of Democracy Wall, reverberated in the popular memory as a clear symbol of " the people as creators of history," and of their right to express opposition towards tyrannical developments within the Party. The official reversal of the verdict on the Tian An Men Incident, on 15 November 1978 (when the authorities announced that it had, after all, been " a wholly revolutionary action " directed against the regime of the Gang of Four) came as a rousing vindication of the demand for a greater degree of popular involvement in the political process, and as such supplied the key impetus

* " Midwinter spring is its own season,/ Sempiternal though sodden towards sundown "
(T. S. Eliot, *Four Quartets*)

Grateful acknowledgment is made to Professor Stuart Schram, Martin Lockett and Lau Kin Chi for their helpful comments on the first draft of this article.

[1] " Open letter to Zong Fuxian," written by " the holder of work permit no. 0538 " (i.e. Lü Pu, son of a veteran high-ranking cadre, who subsequently became an editor of the unofficial journal *April 5th Forum*), dated 19 Nov. 1978; published in *Documents on the Chinese Democratic Movement 1978–1980*, Claude Widor (ed.), (Paris and Hong Kong), p. 365.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for the " Democracy Movement " which followed. Indeed, the alternative name adopted by the latter—April 5th Movement—not only established the link with the Tian An Men Incident, but also evoked a more far-reaching sense of historical continuity with the May 4th Movement of 1919.[2] With its bold, iconoclastic advocacy of the modern Western ideas of " Mr Democracy and Mr Science," the May 4th Movement had ushered in an era of profound social and cultural change in China, and the Democracy Movement of 1978–81 felt itself to have been charged with a mission of comparable historical significance.

The story of the first few months of the Democracy Movement—the initial euphoria when Deng Xiaoping appeared to give his blessing to the poster-writers and speech-makers of the Wall, the subsequent proliferation of popular unofficial journals and societies, and the first grim crackdown against the movement in spring 1979—has been faithfully and graphically described elsewhere by various eye-witness commentators.[3] The present article focuses instead upon certain key developments within the Democracy Movement during its later and more mature phase: notably the channelling of activity into the new, and officially sponsored, direct democratic election of delegates to local People's Congresses, and the attempts to form a nationwide grouping of all unofficial publications. The article also considers certain theoretical analyses put forward by the movement, and assesses the so-called " reform faction " in the Party, an influential body of political thinkers and policy-makers which, since early 1978, has been conducting its own democracy movement—the " movement for the emancipation of the mind." (This was inaugurated by a crucial debate on " practice as the sole criterion of truth " which, by successfully challenging the doctrine of Mao's infallibility, had served to undermine the continued dominance of ultra-leftist ideology and pave the way for the ascent of Deng Xiaoping and his followers.)[4] From the outset, the activists of the Democracy Movement emphatically rejected the " dissident " role, with some of their most incisive polemics being directed at those inside and outside China who casually attempted to hang this label upon them—for their general strategy was precisely one of seeking to complement the reforming efforts of this key section of the Party and intellectual establishment. Although this link between the official and unofficial movements was almost entirely conceptual rather than organizational, it was nonetheless crucial. Indeed, it was the bold emergence of a progressive and liberalizing tendency within the Party which provided the initial inspiration and self-confidence of the com-

[2] In the Chinese system of expressing dates of the year, April 5th appears as " four-five," while May 4th appears as " five-four "; hence, the one is immediately suggestive of the other.

[3] See, for example: *Beijing Street Voices*, by David S. G. Goodman (Marion Boyars, 1981); *Coming Alive—China After Mao*, by Roger Garside (Andre Deutsch, 1981), chs. 10–12; *The Chinese—Portrait of a People*, by John Fraser (Collins, 1980), Chapters 12–14. Two excellent accounts covering the whole course of the Democracy Movement are: *Wild Lilies, Poisonous Weeds*, by Gregor Benton (ed.), Pluto Press, 1982; *Democracy Wall and the Unofficial Journals*, by Chen Ruoxi, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1982.

[4] For a full discussion of the debate on the criterion of truth, see " Politics and Epistemology in China Since Mao," by Brantly Womack, in *The China Quarterly* No. 80, Dec, 1979, pp. 768–92.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

moners who pioneered the Democracy Movement. The preparatory and formal sessions of the Party's Third Plenum of November–December 1978, at which Deng Xiaoping's " practice " or " reform " faction triumphed over Hua Guofeng (the interim successor to Mao) and his " whateverist " faction (so termed because of its unconditional adherence to the policies and ideas of Mao), formed the official background to the Democracy Movement's initial development.

The Democracy Movement, broadly defined, encompassed four somewhat disparate groups of people: those involved in running unofficial journals—the theorists and polemicists of the movement; educated youth demanding their return to the cities from the countryside whence they had been banished by Cultural Revolution policies; peasant petitioners who had often walked long distances to the capital to plead their case before the central authorities; and all kinds of other petitioners seeking redress for a wide variety of grievances.[5] The common factor among members of the first two groups was that, apart from a sizeable minority of those involved in the journals who possessed high-cadre family connections, they mostly belonged to the " lost generation " of the Cultural Revolution.

Those of the " lost generation " had cut their political teeth as Red Guards—immature and often fanatical—under privileged orders from the Great Helmsman himself to " bombard the headquarters " of the Party establishment. Their glory was short-lived, however, for in 1968 when the country arrived at the brink of civil war they were abruptly disowned by Mao, and packed off to the countryside to learn revolution the hard way amongst a largely unwelcoming peasantry. Their subsequent experience of the harsh realities of life endured by 80 per cent of China's population (in material terms, the grinding poverty, and in social terms, the oppression by local cadres) was crucial in effecting the shift in outlook for that section of the " lost generation " which was to survive intellectually, and which would later emerge as the very different " thinking generation " of the Democracy Movement.

WHILE the Democracy Movement displayed a surprising degree of organizational *élan* from the outset, it was not until the founding in mid-December 1978 of the first unofficial journal, *April 5th Forum*, that the movement acquired its first real organizational focus.[6] This journal was founded through a merger of a tiny earlier publication,

[5] For an account of the educated youth movement in Shanghai, see " The Educated Youth Return: the poster campaign in Shanghai from November 1978 to March 1979 " by Anne McLaren, in *The Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs*, No. 2, July 1979.

[6] One result of the Tian An Men demonstrations which was to have great significance for the Democracy Movement was the clandestine compilation and circulation of the Tian An Men poems mourning Premier Zhou Enlai and denouncing the Cultural Revolutionary leadership. This mimeographed collection of poems (put together by 16 members of the Second Foreign Languages Institute of Peking under the collective pseudonym of " Tong Huaizhou ") was eventually, in mid-1978, published officially, and this official recognition of a formerly clandestine publication was probably one of the main sources of inspiration and self-legitimation for the unofficial publishing groups of the Democracy Movement.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

People's Forum, and a group called the *April 5th Society*, headed by Xu Wenli (who was to become one of the movement's most widely respected and influential figures). Dozens of similar unofficial journals were established, in many different cities, over the following two and a half years. They comprised working memberships ranging from a few individuals to several tens of individuals, and they mostly produced runs of only a few hundred primitively mimeographed copies per issue. Nearly all journals were sold openly either on the streets, through mail order, or by a combination of the two.

The Enlightenment Society (significantly named, in view of the official analysis which saw China as emerging, with the fall of the Gang of Four, from a protracted period of neo-feudal rule) made world headlines in October 1978 with a huge collection of poems entitled " God of Fire Symphonic Poems " which it pasted up on a wall by the offices of the *People's Daily*, and with its " Open Letter to President Carter " inviting the latter to take a greater interest in the question of human rights in China. *The Thaw Society*, an offshoot of *Enlightenment*, was headed by a young worker named Li Jiahua whose political ideas comprised an eclectic mixture of Rousseau, Sun Yatsen and Christianity. These two societies represent that part of the movement which looked somewhat uncritically to the West for inspiration (although one of the founding members of *Enlightenment*, the poet Huang Xiang, was himself a Marxist).[7]

The most dramatic and sensational journals were Wei Jingsheng's *Exploration*, and the journal of the Chinese Human Rights Alliance. These contained strident condemnations of the socialist political system and idealistic appeals for Western-style democracy and human rights. Articles such as that of Wei Jingsheng describing life and conditions in Peking's top political prison—Qincheng No. 1—make fascinating and disturbing reading, although the novelty of such material does tend to fade after a while.[8] Writers like Wei Jingsheng were indeed more radical political thinkers than most, in that they disregarded the permissible limits of debate, and for this reason they were also the only true dissidents in the Democracy Movement. But for the movement as a whole, it was imperative to think tactically as well as strategically; the consensus held that both could be done profitably within the general framework of socialism, and that truly dissident tactics could only constitute a liability to the movement's future prospects for survival. There was general acknowledgment that calls for " human rights " were needlessly provocative, and the focus of concern therefore lay more with the issues of citizens' rights, electoral representation and a strengthened legal system.

Journals such as *April 5th Forum*, *Spring of Peking*, *Fertile Soil*, *Masses Reference News* and *Voice of the People* (Canton) embodied the general

[7] For English translations of Huang Xiang's poetry, see *Coming Alive—China after Mao* by Roger Garside, pp. 92, 133, 211, 287–96, 382; see also *The Fifth Modernization*, James D. Seymour (ed.), (New York, 1980), pp. 263–81.

[8] For English translations of the main writings of Wei Jingsheng, see *The Fifth Modernization*, James D. Seymour (ed.), pp. 47, 141, 196, 214.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tone of moderate and constructive criticism which was most typical of the movement as a whole. Rather than merely denouncing the existence in China of bureaucracy, injustice and special privileges, or calling for the wholesale importation of Western forms and ideas, they set themselves the more painstaking task of defining and arguing for distinctively socialist forms of democracy. Their adoption of a broadly Marxist theoretical approach allowed them to deal with Party orthodoxy on its own ground, to engage in a dialogue with official ideology and policy rather than in the thankless task of changing the whole theoretical terrain of the debate on democracy in China.

A majority of the unnofficial journals early on adopted strict constitutional rules governing the running of their activities and the behaviour of individual members, the purpose of such self-imposed discipline usually being to prevent actions which might provide a pretext for repressive measures by the authorities; *April 5th Forum*, for example, declared that it was organized on the basis of democratic centralism.[9] The Chinese Human Rights Alliance, however, went so far as to try and constitute itself as a political party, with the aim of securing formal representation in the National People's Congress (although this move prompted a split within the Alliance). Such developments, especially after the raising by certain sections of the movement of a call for the establishment of a two- or multi-party system,[10] undoubtedly fuelled the Party's exaggerated concern that the unofficial journals in general posed a threat to its own much cherished " leading role."

Besides the flourishing of debate on political matters, an important aspect of the Democracy Movement was its extensive fostering of a new and vigorous creative literature. The most famous unofficial literary journal was *Today*, which published a total of nine lengthy issues containing short stories, poetry and critical essays (sometimes introducing the readership to aspects of European modernist literature). These works, many of which had been composed during the Cultural Revolution decade, often displayed a biting authenticity of content and a high degree of technical merit; indeed, several poems and short stories were later republished in official literary journals—no doubt at a certain amount of risk to the editors concerned. The appreciation of works of literature was central to the spirit of the Democracy Movement, and was by no means the preoccupation of a cultured minority.[11]

[9] See interview with Xu Wenli of June 1979 published in *Joint Publication Research Services* series of extracts from political, sociological and military writings on China (*JPRS* 75442, No. 73, p. 5) in which Xu describes the aims and working conditions of *April 5th Forum*.

[10] See interview with Wang Xizhe (*New Left Review* No. 131, Jan–Feb. 1982), and also Chen Erjin's " On Proletarian–Democratic Revolution," as referred to on pp. 87–88 below.

[11] See *Beijing Street Voices* by David Goodman for translations from the poetry of the Democracy Movement. The visual arts were another important area of Democracy Movement activity, and a group of young unofficial artists, the " Stars," even succeeded in having their work displayed in a special exhibition in the Peking Art Gallery. However, the " Stars " were later to become the focus of an international diplomatic incident when one of their number, a young woman named Li Shuang, was arrested just prior to her planned marriage to a French diplomat; for an account of the Li Shuang incident, see *The Sunday Times Magazine* of 18 April 1982, by Isabel Hilton. See also " Unofficial Art in China," by Robin Munro, *Index on Censorship*, Dec. 1982, pp. 36–39.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE attempt by a young woman, Fu Yuehua, to provide direction and leadership for the many peasant petitioners flocking to Peking in the winter of 1978 resulted in a mass demonstration of peasants (" against hunger and oppression, for democracy and human rights," as their banner read) in central Peking in January 1979. This and other similar events presented the authorities with the alarming possibility of an organizational linkage taking place between the unofficial student and worker-intellectual movement and the vast numbers of the rural population seeking redress for their grievances from the years of the Cultural Revolution. The arrest and imprisonment of Fu shortly thereafter dealt the first real blow to the movement's hopes for a productive and cooperative relationship with the post-Mao establishment.

Spring 1979 saw a clear crystallization of opinion within the Party against these various newly-emergent tendencies at the grassroots. In a major speech of 30 March, Deng Xiaoping specified " four basic principles " which all citizens must uphold, and from which no deviation would be permitted: Party leadership, the socialist path, the dictatorship of the proletariat (now termed " the people's democratic dictatorship "), and Marxism–Leninism–Mao Zedong Thought.[12] This terse and unambiguous prescription of the minimum articles of faith for Chinese society under Deng Xiaoping meshed uneasily with his own earlier injunction to " emancipate the mind," but the implications for Party policy were nonetheless quite clear. The limits of liberalization were being tactically redrawn, and in a way which would exclude any activities and developments not directly sponsored by the Party. In the ensuing crackdown against the Democracy Movement, Wei Jingsheng of *Exploration*, Chen Lü and Ren Wanding of the Chinese Human Rights Alliance, and a number of other leading writers and activists were arrested and imprisoned. The following appear to have been the main factors underlying this crackdown: the occurrence of China's war with Vietnam seems, by enhancing the role of the army, to have produced a temporary resurgence of leftist influence within the Party, thus necessitating certain symbolic concessions by Deng; the previous tolerance extended towards Democracy Wall had by now already fulfilled one of its undoubted functions—the creation of a favourable foreign press for the new, liberalizing regime of Deng Xiaoping on the eve of normalization of Sino–US diplomatic relations; and the Party leadership was apparently coming under increasing pressure from the " silent majority " in the bureaucracy, at whom the pens of the budding generation of street politicians were primarily aimed. Whether Deng's initial display of tolerance towards the Democracy Movement had stemmed from genuine sympathies on his part, or simply from a wish to use the movement as a political instrument in his power struggle against Hua Guofeng at the Third Plenum, he now saw it as expendable, and as a threat to " stability and unity."

This first crackdown by no means put an end to the Democracy

[12] " Jianchi Si Xiang Jiben Yuanze," in *Deng Xiaoping Wenxuan* (Peking, 1983), pp. 144–70.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Movement—the euphoric expectations of the early months dissolved, to be replaced by a more realistic appraisal of the task ahead; the movement matured, and prepared itself for a long and difficult haul. Moreover, official forces for reform were still hard at work, and the political climate soon began to show signs of improvement. The Democracy Movement experienced a considerable revival during the late summer of 1979, when a series of new unofficial journals appeared. Even the radical *Exploration* recommenced publication, despite the earlier arrest of its main editor, Wei Jingsheng. However, the sentencing of Wei to 15 years' imprisonment in October quickly dispelled this renewed sense of optimism.[13] By early 1980 most unofficial journals in Peking had been forced to close down, and the focus of unofficial publishing tended to shift to south and central China, where political conditions appeared to be more favourable. A new form of publishing became current, with the production of short " bulletins " which circulated internally within the movement rather than being offered for sale to the general public. This formed a kind of holding operation, allowing the movement to maintain a skeleton structure, so that if and when the political climate improved it would be possible for former large-scale open activities to be resumed. And indeed, with the delivering of official speeches in the summer of 1980 calling for further democratic reform,[14] a second renaissance of unofficial publishing occurred, notably in the provinces.

IN June 1979, the Second Plenary Session of the Fifth National People's Congress passed several new laws, one of which was the Electoral Law. This stipulated not only that all democratic parties and popular bodies could put forward candidates for prefectural, district and work-unit elections to local People's Congresses, but also that any individual member of the electorate could stand for election provided that three people could be found to propose the nomination.[15] The opportunity to redirect activities into an officially sponsored channel was seized upon by many participants in the Democracy Movement.

As far as can be ascertained, the first incidence of individuals standing as independent candidates took place in Shanghai in April 1980, when some students put themselves forward for election at Fudan University and at Shanghai Teachers Training College. This event was picked up almost immediately by the Canton unofficial journal *Road of the People*, which reported it excitedly as being the first such event in the history of the PRC.[16] One of the first firm links between the by then 18-month-old Democracy Movement and local district election campaigns occurred within the month, when a worker at the Shanghai Power Plant, Fu Shenqi, distributed amongst his workmates a leaflet containing both his own statement of intent to stand in the forthcoming work-unit election and a

[13] See *Issues and Studies* (March 1980) for a full translation of the spirited statement of self-defence made by Wei Jingsheng at his trial on 16 Oct. 1979.

[14] See, for example, the speeches referred to in note 28 below.

[15] See *Beijing Review* No. 8 (1980) for a description of the new election process.

[16] *Renmin zhi Lu*, 20 April 1980; reprinted in *Guanchajia monthly* (Hong Kong), July 1980, p. 12.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

copy of the *Road of the People* report on the events at Fudan University. The significance of Fu's candidature lay in the fact that Fu had been one of the leading activists in the Democracy Movement in Shanghai, having edited the unofficial journal *Voice of Democracy* and participated in various impromptu study groups. Fu was then 25 years old, and came from an ordinary worker's family. In a moving article written in September 1980, Fu described how a close friend of his, Wang Shenyou, was executed in early 1977 merely for having written a letter to his girlfriend expressing criticisms of the way in which Mao Zedong Thought had been turned into rigid and unchallengeable dogma.[17] Bitter personal experiences such as these were central in motivating the participants of the Democracy Movement to rise above their own fear of the authorities. Indeed, many of those most active during the early phase of the movement had already endured imprisonment, as a result of their participation in the Tian An Men Incident of April 1976.

Fu Shenqi summarized as follows the developing awareness within the Democracy Movement of the vital importance of direct elections:

> The people's publications . . . must redirect themselves into the crucial task of integrating with various electoral activities, and strive to promote electoral contests. If they cannot achieve this, they will become mere transmitters of information, and will fail to develop as the main force in the Democracy Movement.[18]

Fu believed that official antagonism towards independent candidates in direct elections was initially inevitable, democracy being such a strange and unfamiliar phenomenon, but he also believed that the Party as a whole had, through its own harsh experiences during the Cultural Revolution, come to appreciate the necessity for a genuine democratic system; he thus maintained a stance of qualified optimism as to his own prospects for success. In his " Election Address," delivered to 500 workers on the day before the election, Fu began by stating that the scars of the Cultural Revolution would take more than 10 or even 20 years to heal. Echoing a recurrent theme of the Democracy Movement, he maintained that China's disasters had been caused not merely by the evil motives of Lin Biao and the Gang of Four, but by basic faults in the social system itself, faults stemming from China's adoption after 1949 of the heavily centralized Soviet model of government. The solution lay in a thoroughgoing political reform which would transfer the fate of the country from the hands of a privileged minority into the hands of the " legalized popular will."[19]

Despite fulfilling the necessary procedures, Fu encountered strong opposition from his factory Party Committee, who even threatened the workforce with reprisals if it supported him in any way. Fu reported this

[17] English translation in *Wild Lilies, Poisonous Weeds*, pp. 122–27; see *Zhongguo Minzhu Yundong Meiyue Tongxun* Vol. 1, No. 7 (Hong Kong) for Chinese text of this article. See also *Qishi Niandai* Feb. 1982, p. 88, for a comprehensive account of Fu's activities.

[18] See *Minzhu zhi Sheng* No. 9, p. 7; reprinted in *Guanchajia*, Sept. 1981, p. 29.

[19] " Xuanju yanjiang," *Guanchajia*, Aug. 1980, p. 21.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

interference in the free election process to the Election Committee of the South Ward of Shanghai, but the Committee's response was promptly to label him as a dissident. Despite the refusal of the leadership to recognize his nomination, Fu nevertheless succeeded in coming a close second in the first round of voting by standing as an unofficial candidate. He later went on to play a major role in the All-China Association of the People's Press (founded in August 1980), eventually taking over from He Qiu the editorship of the Association's publishing organ, *Zeren* (Responsibility). In his election address, Fu had discussed the possibility of arrest, adding that such an event would show the Electoral Law as being a mere worthless piece of paper; he was finally arrested in April 1981, one of the first casualties of the Party's Draconian " Document No. 9." Where Fu Yuehua must have represented for the authorities a potentially explosive alliance between the Democracy Movement and disaffected members of the peasantry, independent worker election candidates such as Fu Shenqi may have presented the even more alarming prospect of the Democracy Movement developing an organic base within the urban proletariat itself.

LOCAL direct elections, similar, to those which had taken place in Shanghai in the spring of 1980, soon commenced in Peking and other cities later the same year, and a similar pattern of involvement by Democracy Movement activists occurred. These included a significant number of the movement's working-class members, but the most detailed available information concerns the electoral activities of certain of its student participants, and in particular those from Peking University. A quota of two delegates to the Hai Dian District People's Congress was allocated to the student body of Peking University, and of the first three candidates to stand forward, in the winter of 1980, no less than two had been closely involved in the running of Democracy Movement journals.[20] Wang Juntao, only 22 years old, had served as assistant editor of *Spring of Peking*, and moreover held the post of alternate member on the Central Committee of the Communist Youth League (as did another editor of the same journal, Han Zhixiong). He had already achieved national fame as a rehabilitated " hero of the Tian An Men Incident," having been imprisoned for several months in 1976 as a result of his participation in the mass protest. In his election address, he caused a major stir on campus by claiming that Mao had been " a great revolutionary, but not a great Marxist," giving as his reasons that Mao had invariably begun his analyses of Chinese society by looking at class relations instead of at the productive forces, had displayed idealism in inclining towards personal dictatorship rather than allowing the masses themselves to determine the course of history, and had indiscriminately and uncritically condemned the legacy of world culture as being merely feudal or bourgeois. Here, in common with many of his contemporaries, Wang was seeking to discover

[20] Details of elections at Peking University have been drawn from a series of articles in Hong Kong monthlies: *Qishi Niandai* (Feb., March 1981), *Guanchajia* (Jan., March 1981), *Zheng Ming* (Jan., March, April, Oct. 1981). See also *JPRS*, 78012, No. 189, pp. 81–89.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and repossess more mainstream and orthodox conceptions of Marxism, in the wake of the official debunking of Cultural Revolution ideology. Wang described his own generation as having progressed, during the Cultural Revolution, from its former absolute faith in the older generation of revolutionaries to an important ability to " doubt and criticize," but insisted that its present responsibility in involving itself in the newly established elections was to prove that it had now also acquired the ability to be constructive and creative.

Fang Zhiyuan, another candidate, hailed from Canton, and within a few months of his arrival at Peking University in 1978 had become the Peking liaison representative for the authoritative Canton unofficial journal *Voice of the People*, and had become closely involved with the Peking unofficial journal *Fertile Soil*. Fang had been strongly influenced by his reading in Canton, in 1974, of the famous wall-poster " On Socialist Democracy and the Legal System," a poster whose authors—" Li Yizhe "—had boldly anticipated many of the themes of the Democracy Movement. Fang's dominant theme during the election campaign was summed up in his formula: " socialism = public ownership + democracy." Though defeated in the election, Fang went on to become one of the prime movers in a crucial campaign, of December 1980, for the drawing up of a new publication law which would give legal guarantees to the status of unofficial publishing groups.

The election campaign was by all accounts a stormy affair. A total of 29 candidates contested the election, each backed organizationally by their own " election group." Candidates posted their election speeches and other materials all over campus, and canvassed the student body in the evenings. No fewer than 10 independent student newspapers were set up for purposes of monitoring and reporting the course of the election. Nearly 20 large-scale meetings were held at which candidates expounded their views on politics and society, and answered questions from the floor. Debate at these meetings extended openly to such sensitive topics as whether or not China was really a socialist society, whether it sustained a bureaucratic stratum which may already have become a new ruling class, and whether or not China had essentially the same political nature as the Soviet Union.

FOUR female candidates stood for election, the most outspoken and original being 32-year-old Zhang Manling. Zhang, who had been sent down to work amongst the Dai nationality of Yunnan during the early 1970s, had been persecuted during the last months of the rule of the Gang of Four for having openly mourned the death of Premier Zhou Enlai. The political views she espoused during her election campaign were fairly typical ones, although she went further than most in stressing the irreconcilable nature of the antagonism in China between the bureaucracy and the forces of democratic reform. However, it was on the topic of women's liberation that she expressed herself most boldly and forthrightly. Her views regarding the tasks of women's emancipation

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

were, superficially at least, in marked contrast to those of the contemporary women's movement in the West. She held that the historical mission of Chinese women today lay in reclaiming their traditional role of embodying beauty, gentleness and wisdom, while at the same time striving to divest that role of its more negative aspects. Chinese women should re-embrace the values of " Oriental beauty," and fight resolutely against the attempt to turn them into mere " dried-up units of labour power." She called for a greater general appreciation of the beauty of the human body, both male and female, and held that " distortion of the female sex is also a source of suffering for the male, and a great loss for humanity as a whole." Zhang no doubt derived her progressive (in the Chinese context, at any rate) ideas on sexuality from her experience of working amongst the Dai people, whose traditional culture is not only sexually liberal but also gives high status to women. In the more restrained climate of Peking, however, her views were apparently regarded as morally rather blue (or " yellow," as the Chinese would have it), and she was ridiculed and abused at public meetings; nonetheless, she succeeded in gaining around 8 per cent of the vote, and her courageous attempt to found an unofficial Women's Study Association is by any standards an event of major significance in Chinese social history.[21]

The topic of freedom of speech attracted much attention—many candidates held that the closing down of Democracy Wall and the removal from the Constitution of the " four great freedoms " proved that freedom of speech did not now exist in China, for although woefully inadequate these had still represented the only available channels for the true expression of public opinion.[22] The candidate who discussed the question of freedom of speech in the greatest depth and detail, and who eventualy won the election, was Hu Ping.

" The voice of our generation has been ignored for far too long," declared Hu in his election manifesto; but now, with the advent of direct elections, the opportunity to be heard had at last arrived. The election, though on the surface a humble and insignificant affair, nevertheless resembled " a young girl out on her first date, who arrives late and dressed in the most unflattering of clothes—perhaps to test the sincerity of her suitor. . . ." Hu, 33 years old from Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan Province, had achieved the highest marks in the entrance examinations of all those enrolled at Peking University in 1978—sufficient to allow him to proceed directly to a research degree in philosophy (on the subject of

[21] For the full story of Zhang Manling, see " To be Feminist in China," by Anita Rind, in *Wild Lilies, Poisonous Weeds*, pp. 195–201.

[22] In December 1979, the Peking Municipal Committee ordered that Democracy Wall be moved from the city centre to a remote and unobstrusive corner of a park, where poster-writers were required to register their names and addresses with an official before displaying their poster. The " four great freedoms," which had provided legitimation for the style of " extensive democracy " so characteristic of previous mass campaigns (official or otherwise), were: the freedoms to speak out freely, air views fully, hold great debates and write big-character posters; in accordance with a Party proposal of Feb. 1980, the Third Session of the Fifth National People's Congress in Sept. 1980 formally approved the removal of the " four great freedoms " from the Constitution: the right to strike has also subsequently been excised from the Constitution.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Hume's epistemology), despite the fact that he was a mere high-school graduate. He had built up an impressive record of bold and principled social activism from the mid-1960s onwards—as editor of Chengdu's first unofficial journal at the start of the Cultural Revolution, he published a famous article by Yu Luoke refuting the leftist " theory of blood relation," according to which children were seen as directly " inheriting " the (pre-1949) social class of their parents.[23] In 1970, Hu wrote a critique of ultra-left phenomena, such as Lin Biao's attempt to raise Mao to god-like status, for which he was subjected to much persecution and public criticism. Sent down as an educated youth, he had spent five years in the Yunnan countryside, where life had not gone smoothly for him since his family had been unfortunate enough to possess " overseas connections." Hu Ping launched himself eagerly into the Democracy Movement, editing the Peking unofficial journal *Fertile Soil*, in which his long article " On Freedom of Speech " first appeared during 1979:

> The viewpoints we are dealing with here are " unorthodox " viewpoints that are not in any controlling position; they lack all power to force anyone to pay attention to or accept them. If a viewpoint which finds itself in such a disadvantageous position is still capable of attracting the attention of others, then it must be that they have subjected it to a careful comparison with the official view and become genuinely convinced of the superiority of the former. This is always a sign that the viewpoint contains some fresh truths. In other words, one need not guard against the spread of truly absurd statements, while ideas which can (unless suppressed) win people's allegiance are more often than not correct ideas.[24]

ELECTION campaigns proceeded still more dramatically in other cities. In Changsha, for example, students at the Hunan Teachers Training College went on hunger strike in protest at bureaucratic interference in the free electoral process. They sent a delegation to Peking to seek redress of their grievances, and the central authorities on this occasion intervened in their favour; several months later, however, the students' leader, Tao Sen, was arrested. Such acts of student and worker militancy served to hasten the unfolding, in the course of 1981, of a general Party offensive against " bourgeois liberalization." This campaign was mainly directed against the literary and artistic establishments, and sought to curb the increasing output of creative works exposing the " dark side " of society, but it had a clear political thrust as well. Independent election candidates were branded as dissidents by Party leaders, and Hu Ping, upon taking up his seat in the local People's Congress, was accused of having attempted to carry out a Cultural

[23] Yu Luoke was executed for this article during the Cultural Revolution, but has recently been officially adopted as a popular hero on a par with Zhang Zhixin who, before being shot during the same period, had her vocal chords severed to prevent her from shouting slogans of loyalty to Chairman Mao.

[24] For the full text of this article from *Wotu* (April 1979) see *Qishi Niandai* Nos. 134–137, 1981. The article was also published by Yu Guangyuan, Vice-President of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, in the first and only issue of an internally-circulated official publication, *Qingnian Wengao* (Young People's Writing), in early 1981.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Revolution-style movement on campus. Student candidates were reportedly organized to take part in study groups so that they might purge themselves of unorthodox ideas.[25] In a report published in September 1981, summarizing the course of direct elections over the previous year and a half, the Minister of Civil Administration and Chairman of the National County Election Office, Cheng Zihua, stated:

> During these elections, a tiny minority of people made use of the opportunity afforded by the election of people's representatives to carry out so-called " election contests," in which they disregarded the socialist legal system, spread anarchy and ultra-individualism, conducted secret " link-ups," and expressed outrageous and inflammatory views, openly contravening the Four Basic Principles . . . we resolutely oppose this.[26]

Cheng put forward a series of proposals for tightening up the Electoral Law, transferring the final power to determine formal lists of candidates to a new body (the " Electoral District Leadership Group ") not specified in the 1979 Law—changes precluding genuinely independent candidates from participating in the electoral process.

The ambiguities in the Party's attitude towards the issue of electoral reform reflected a long-standing historical conflation of the nominally separate spheres of jurisdiction of Party and state. In the case of the direct elections of 1980–81, the legacy of Mao can be seen to have been at work. In his seminal programmatic article of 1940, " On New Democracy," Mao concluded a stirring passage on the introduction of universal and equal suffrage towards the proposed order of New Democracy with the resounding *non sequitur*—" Such is the system of democratic centralism."[27]

A SIGNIFICANT section of the Party and intellectual establishment is only too well aware of this historical legacy; the activists of the Democracy Movement believed that this group of people comprised a " reform faction " upon whom they could rely, if not for support, then at least for tolerance and tacit acceptance of their activities. This was a factor of tremendous significance in allowing them to view themselves not as dissidents, but rather as the natural allies of a progressive section of the leadership. The term " movement for the emancipation of the mind " was one which had become current in the official press in the autumn of 1978, and was closely related to the campaign to make " practice the sole criterion of truth." The crucial significance of the latter had lain in its challenging of the dogma whereby Mao's thought was regarded as being sacred and absolute truth, and in thus having smoothed the path for a direct repudiation of the Cultural Revolution, and more generally of the ultra-leftist line which had dominated China, with only brief periods of respite, since the late 1950s.

[25] *Zheng Ming*, April 1981, p. 44.
[26] See *Shiyue Pinglun* (Hong Kong), Vol. 8, No. 10–11, p. 7; see also *Zheng Ming* Oct. 1981, p. 78.
[27] *Selected Works of Mao Tse-tung* (Peking 1967), Vol. 2, p. 352.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Radical and vital though this challenge was, it did not in itself imply any structural political change; a certain section of the official circles most closely associated with the " movement to emancipate the mind " have, however, gone on to demand just such a structural reform.

The post-Mao regime, under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping, Zhao Ziyang and Hu Yaobang, has shown genuine awareness of the pressing need for a political reform to stimulate China's ailing economy. In a sense, however, the burden of developing far-reaching and inevitably controversial programmes for reform of the bureaucratic institutional system has had to fall on the shoulders of those holding somewhat less key positions in the leadership ranks. To be sure, Deng Xiaoping has presided over moves to separate the spheres of Party and state, to abolish the system of life-long tenure of cadre posts, to establish potentially powerful " Congresses of Workers and Staff Members " (which in certain experimental work-units are even responsible for electing factory managers), to implement a system of direct elections to local People's Congresses and to purge corrupt and inefficient cadres. But Deng and the other top leadership bear the dual responsibility of not only pursuing reform but also holding the Party together, and are therefore continually obliged to make political concessions to other powerful interest groups in society—notably the mass of the Party bureaucracy, and the People's Liberation Army. The formulation of long-term and possibly speculative programmes for structural reform was left to those holding authoritative but less sensitive positions. Liao Gailong, a prominent Party historian and member of the Party Central Committee's Policy Research Section—directly responsible for supplying plans and policies to the top leadership—would seem to have been just such a person.

IN October 1980, Liao delivered a lengthy speech, at an academic conference on Party history, in which he put forward the most complete and detailed official blueprint for a democratic reform of the political structure to have appeared in China to date.[28] To describe the overall programme, Liao coined the term " Geng Shen Reform," thereby drawing a direct parallel with the 1898 Constitutional Reform Movement, and so pointing to the profound significance of the new policy initiatives.[29] In a series of radical new proposals towards the goal of genuine self-government and self-management by the masses, Liao called for the trade unions and all other mass organizations to become truly independent of the Party. For without a fundamental change of tune, China too would have its Polish crisis: " We too could experience a similar situation—would the working class here not rise and rebel also? "

[28] " Historical Experience and our Road of Development," translated in *Issues and Studies*, Oct., Nov. and Dec. 1981; this speech appears to be a synthesis of an earlier speech by Liao of 22 July 1980 and a speech by Deng Xiaoping (publ. in *Deng Xiaoping Wenxuan* pp. 280–302, translation in *Beijing Review* Nos. 40 and 41, 1983) of 18 Aug. 1980 to an enlarged session of the Politburo.

[29] " Geng Shen " is the name given to the year 1980 in the traditional Chinese 60-year cyclical calendar; the 1898 Constitutional Reform Movement is also named in Chinese, with reference to the traditional calendar, as the " Wu Xu Reform."

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Liao raised criticisms of the whole concept of " unified leadership by the Party," and boldly asserted that Mao had been wrong, in his 1957 speech on " The Correct Handling of Contradictions among People," to see democracy as being merely a means rather than an end in itself. For Liao, " Democracy is both a means and an end; it is the means by which we attain political ends, but at the same time it is itself our final aim. Let me put the question: Do our people merely want a prosperous life and nothing else? We also want freedom, we want extensive freedom, we want high-level democracy." In rejecting the notion that the Geng Shen Reform might suffer an abortive fate similar to that of the 1898 Reform Movement, Liao pointed out that the latter was attempted under the auspices of a weak emperor, one who had lacked sufficient power to ensure the success of his ambitious project for reform. Liao described the Geng Shen Reform as being a programme going far beyond anything previously attempted by any communist party or socialist state, and as one which future generations would look back upon with great pride.

Liao's speech brought forth a warm reception from the Democracy Movement; both Wang Xizhe and Xu Wenli quickly responded with articles developing the fundamental theses of Liao's programme for reform in accordance with their own particular priorities.[30] Wang and Xu expressed the hope that the Geng Shen Reform might be effectively complemented by a parallel, grass-roots movement for democracy. Xu's view whereby " The only genuinely viable course for carrying out reform is through a combination of from above to below and from below to above " follows on from his perception that both the masses at the grass-roots of society and the top leadership earnestly desire reform, but that reform is bound to meet with considerable opposition from the middle and lower levels of the bureaucracy. Other Democracy Movement writers have expressed this state of affairs through the analogy of " an iron bar which is hot at both ends but cold in the middle."

TO sense the general flavour of the thinking of the official reform faction at this time, and to understand why the Democracy Movement should have invested so many hopes in it, one can do no better than turn to some of the writings of this faction. Its main power base appears to be centred in the media, and in social science and theoretical circles. As Yu Haocheng, chief editor of the Masses Publishing House, in criticizing China's past failure to recongize its own structural defects as well as the mere surface blemishes, stated in October 1980: " The lack of democracy is the greatest malady from which many socialist countries suffer . . . without democracy there is no socialism. . . . Our high-up

[30] " Mao Zedong yu Wenhua Da Geming " by Wang Xizhe, *Qishi Niandai* Feb. 1981, pp. 26–49; and English translation, " Mao Zedong and the Cultural Revolution," has been published by Plough Publications (Hong Kong 1981), and excerpts appear in *Wild Lilies Poisonous Weeds*, op. cit. " Cujin Geng Shen Bianfa de Jianyishu " by Xu Wenli, *Qishi Niandai*, Feb. 1981, pp. 50–51; See *Wild Lilies, Poisonous Weeds*, pp. 56–62, for English translation.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

leading cadres are more fearful of the masses, and more divorced from them than the high-up officials in capitalist countries."[31]

Jiang Chunze, of the Institute of World Economic Research, wrote forcefully on the need for a rearrangement of power relations within industrial enterprises:

> At present, the workers in our enterprises are mere tools employed by the leading cadres in order to fulful the Plan. The masses describe the situation in our factories as one where " the Party Committee makes the decisions, the factory manager delivers the reports and the trades union runs the errands, while the workers have no knowledge about anything apart from their own work " . . . They pose the question: " Why should I care about the affairs of the enterprise when, apart from what little I receive in wages, I have no idea of what becomes of all the value I create! "

" There is no essential difference " declared Jiang, " between this situation and the system of wage-labour."

Lin Wei, assistant general editor of *Social Sciences in China* journal, opposed the doctrine whereby the public ownership system is seen as providing a fundamental guarantee for the interests of the people, maintaining instead that only democracy may provide such a guarantee. Particularly in the countryside, corruption amongst many cadres is so great that " public ownership of the means of production may actually turn into private ownership by certain cadres, with socialism ending up as feudal rule. Socialism is therefore inseparable from democracy."

According to Zhang Xianyang, of the Institute of Marxism–Leninism and Mao Zedong Thought:

> The primary and most fundamental reason for the production of bureaucracy is to be found in defects of the structure . . . the system of bureaucratic centralism relies upon the centralization of power from above to below; the entire will of the bureaucrats and the bureaucratic machine is towards centralization—in such a system there is fundamentally no democracy worth mentioning.

Another central figure in the reform faction is Wang Ruoshui, until recently an assistant general editor of the *People's Daily*; he has sought to repudiate the gathering trend in official thinking towards a counterposing of " emancipation of the mind " and the " four basic principles." Wang argued that in order truly to " uphold Marxism–Leninism " it is first of all necessary to redefine it, so distorted has the doctrine become over the years, and that the precondition for this lies precisely in emancipating the mind. This formulation effectively turns the tables on official attempts to use the "four basic principles " as a means for reducing the permissible limits of debate. Wang Ruoshui has been particularly concerned with the question of alienation under socialism: " Political alienation consists in the servants of the people turning into the masters of the people, riding on

[31] This and the following series of brief quotations are taken from *Guangming Ribao*, 16, 17 and 19 Oct. 1980, and from *Dang Dai* monthly (Hong Kong), March 1981. See *Ming Bao* monthly (Hong Kong), Jan. 1982, pp. 64–68 for a further discussion of the official " reform faction."

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the heads of the people and acquiring wealth and prestige; the government becomes the overlord, not subject to control by the people, and so turns into an alienated force."[32]

Certain members of the Party and intellectual establishment even went so far as to give their support, either openly or indirectly, to the activities of the Democracy Movement. The writers Bai Hua and Gong Liu, for examples, spoke out in defence of the movement at the Fourth Congress of Writers and Artists in the autumn of 1979.[33] Guo Luoji, a Party theoretician and academic, raised questions at the People's Congress in 1979 concerning the arbitrary arrest of activists and the suppression of unofficial journals by the public security organs. Furthermore, shortly after the trial and sentencing of Wei Jingsheng, Guo had an article published in the *People's Daily* in which he roundly condemned the principle of " making speech a crime." Displaying considerable courage at such a sensitive moment, Guo stated: "In the politics of democracy, we should permit discussion; if discussion is not permitted then that is the politics of despotism."[34]

Little is known regarding any direct contacts which may have taken place between the Democracy Movement and members of the Party and intellectual establishment. One striking and highly suggestive exception to this is an account by Liu Qing (a former editor of *April 5th Forum*) in a long and fascinating testimony smuggled out of a remote " re-education through labour " camp, of a four-hour meeting between Hu Yaobang (now General Secretary of the Communist Party of China) and the Democracy Movement activists Lü Pu and Wang Juntao, in Hu's home in October 1979.[35]

In general, the insecure position of the reform faction in relation to the bureaucracy as a whole, despite its patronage by the highest levels of the leadership, has increasingly forced it towards a repudiation of the grass-roots movement for democratic reform. The fear aroused in the establishment by the voice of the streets, in the wake of the traumatic experience of the Cultural Revolution, is such that even the reform faction was only really prepared to countenance a reform carried out from above to below, under the strict control of the Party.

THE unofficial movement embraced a wide and often confusing range of theoretical currents, and the following merely outlines a few of the more important ones. Overall, two fairly distinct analytical tendencies arose concerning the theoretical basis for socialist forms of

[32] For English translation of articles by Wang Ruoshui, see *JPRS* (75291, No. 66), pp. 103–11, and *JPRS* (76474, No. 119), pp. 28–31.

[33] For Bai Hua, see *Renmin Ribao*, 13 Nov. 1979; for Gong Liu, see *Qishi Niandai*, June 1980, p. 57.

[34] See *Guanchajia*, Nov. 1980, pp. 6–8.

[35] *Yuzhong Shouji* (Prison Notebook) by Liu Qing, *Baixing* Bi-Weekly Press (Hong Kong), Oct. 1981, p. 49; see also edited extracts in *Qishi Niandai*, Oct. 1981. A full English translation appears in *Chinese Law and Government* (M. E. Sharpe, New York), 1983. According to Liu, Hu Yaobang claimed in a speech to the Higher Party School that he " had got the better " of Lü Pu during this discussion, but Lü Pu insisted they had simply reached an impasse after four hours of discussion on the Democracy Movement; see Note 1, above.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

democracy. The first argued that since democracy elsewhere had arisen historically as the product of bourgeois property relations, China should return to the mixed economy and limited political pluralism of the period of New Democracy, which had existed during the first few years after Liberation before being prematurely curtailed as a result of the ascendance of Mao's radical leftist line. Both Wang Juntao of *Spring of Peking*, and Wang Xizhe (a former member of the " Li Yizhe " writing group from Canton, and the only one of the group to have played a major role in the Democracy Movement) adhered to this view. " Moreover," wrote the latter, " China is already moving in this direction. It is only on the basis of readjustment and reform of the economic system, with development of free competition between enterprises, that it will become possible for different political parties reflecting different interest groups and strata to exist."[36]

The second, more purist tendency envisaged socialist democracy as being the state form appropriate to *advanced* socialism, and so argued against retrogressive measures and in favour of further equalitarian political progress on the basis of a perfected form of existing economic relations and institutions. In certain key respects, notably its stress on abolishing the division of labour and its radical critique of the bureaucracy, this tendency borrowed from the spirit—but by no means the letter—of the Cultural Revolution strategy whereby the socialist transformation of the economic base was to be closely succeeded by an appropriate reformation of the superstructure. It found clearest expression in the unexpected emergence within the Democracy Movement, during 1980, of an influential minority which sought to defend the " valuable later thinking of Mao." This school of thought seems to have been strongly influenced by the publication in June 1979, by *April 5th Forum*, of a maverick text entitled " On Proletarian-Democratic Revolution."[37] Written during 1975–76 (the last two years of Mao's life) by a young teacher from Yunan Province named Chen Erjin, this text formed an intriguing synthesis of a far-left revolutionary critique of the bureaucracy, and a " rightist " admiration for the successful institutionalization of political opposition as achieved under Western bourgeois democracy (particularly the United States). Invoking the Hegelian–Marxian philosophical principle of *Aufhebung* (" sublation "), Chen argued for a critical inheritance of the bourgeois-democratic state form, whereby the latter would be reconstituted on the basis of socialist public ownership, and thus invested with proletarian content. In Chen's view, China stands " at the crossroads," still able to choose whether to develop democratically towards true socialism, or to follow the path taken by the Soviet Union into fully-developed " revisionism." Rejecting, however, the

[36] See interview with Wang Xizhe in *New Left Review*, No. 131, Jan.–Feb. 1982, and election article by Wang Juntao in *Qishi Niandai*, March 1981; the passage quoted here was edited out in the *NLR* version of the interview.

[37] A full translation of Chen's book has been published by Verso Editions (London, 1984), under the title *China: Crossroads Socialism* (translated and introduced by Robin Munro). My introduction to this volume deals more fully with many of the themes raised here.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Maoist view of revisionism as being a mere back-tracking of the revolution (" capitalist restoration "), he instead analyses revisionism as comprising a wholly new set of class relations, arising on the far side of " capitalism." His critique of the new ruling class in the Soviet Union and (potentially) in China too—the " bureaucrat-monopoly privileged class " —places him firmly within the tradition of dissident Marxist thought deriving from Mao's ideas of the late 1950s onwards, a tradition which included the ultra-left " Sheng Wulian " group of Red Guards from Hunan who talked of a new " red capitalist " class, the " Li Yizhe " poster-writers who talked of new " feudal-fascist bureaucrats," and Xu Shuiliang from Nanking who in 1975 talked of a new " revisionist privileged aristocracy."[38] (Xu, after several years' imprisonment, went on to play an important role in the Democracy Movement.) Chen's text, which calls for the establishment of a dual communist party-system, provides perhaps the first comprehensive theory in China regarding the evolution from bureaucracy to new ruling class. Wang Xizhe's long article of historical analysis, " Mao Zedong and the Cultural Revolution," was written mainly in order to refute this second, " valuable later thinking of Mao " tendency.[39]

A different polarity of views emerged over the question of the relationship between democracy and proletarian dictatorship; one section of the movement embraced the more traditional Leninist perspective—of dictatorship being exercised over the class enemy and democracy applying internally within " the people "—while at the same time insisting upon structural reforms designed to guarantee a genuine implementation of this internal democracy; another argued that dictatorship, far from complementing democracy, could only stand in direct opposition to it, and that anyway the lack of hostile classes under socialism necessitated a drastic rethinking of the whole concept and reality of the proletariat. Interestingly, despite his economic bias towards " New Democracy," Wang Xizhe called for a further consolidation of the proletarian dictatorship; however, this consolidation entailed a process whereby a true " class "dictatorship would replace the paternalistic Party dictatorship, by means of a Paris Commune-style system of representative delegation and, above all, " popular supervision."[40]

Perhaps feeling exasperated at the highly ideological content of these various debates (a trait, it must be added, which is simply a reflection of the long-standing nature of official Party discourse), a number of Democracy Movement writers decided to return to first principles, and analyse the precise socio-economic nature of the existing society. Zhu

[38] For Mao's ideas, see *Mao Tsetung—A critique of Soviet Economics*, Monthly Review Press, 1977. For the writings of Li Yizhe and Sheng Wulian, see *The Revolution is dead—Long Live the Revolution* (the Seventies Bi-Monthly Press, Hong Kong); for article by Xu Shui-liang, see *JPRS* (74532, no. 31), pp. 1–16, and for discussion of Xu see *Guanchajia*, Sept. 1981, p. 25.

[39] For details of this article, see note 30 above.

[40] A translation of Wang's article " Strive for a Class Dictatorship of the Proletariat " appears in *New Left Review* No. 121 (May–June 1980), pp. 33–48. An anthology of Wang's writings has been published in Chinese by Qishi Niandai Press (Hong Kong, 1981), entitled *Wang Xizhe Lunwen Ji*.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Jianbin, a young steel worker from Wuhan and editor of *Sound of the Bell*, concluded that Chinese socialism constituted an anomalous *pot-pourri* of forces and relations of production, an " intermediate formation " lying somewhere between feudalism, capitalism and socialism, and that the only solution lay in the vigorous implementation of NEP-style " state capitalism " as a means of creating the missing economicbasis for socialism. This determinist line of thought reached its apogee in the writings of Huang Shi, who declared China's economy to be merely a highly backward system of capitalist commodity production labouring under the dysfunctional and restrictive dual burden of socialist ideology and state interference. Official acknowledgment of these realities would, he argued, form the prerequisite for the construction of a benign system of " people's capitalism " (based to a certain degree upon the Japanese economic model), which ultimately would " lead towards socialism."[41] At the opposite pole to this, perhaps, stood the short-lived unofficial journal *Peking Youth*, edited by a group of workers from a chemical plant. This remarkable journal was filled with articles extravagantly praising the politico-economic system and general quality of life enjoyed by citizens in the Soviet Union. Finally, tentative moves were even made by one or two writers towards an objective critical assessment of the thought of Trotsky, perhaps for the first time openly since the founding of the People's Republic.[42]

THE other, final initiative undertaken by the Democracy Movement in the course of 1980, besides its participation in local direct elections, was the founding of an " all-China Association of the People's Press." The first attempt to create a unified organization embracing various unofficial journals from all over the country was made as early as January of that year. The leading figure behind this bold inititiative was He Qiu, a shipyard worker and editor of the Canton unofficial journal *Road of the People*. According to an autobiographical article, He Qiu was born in 1948 into a middle-class family.[43] His father had been a member of the Peasants and Workers Democratic League, and had been elected several times after Liberation to the local People's Congress. He Qiu describes how he " went on the Red Guard bandwagon " at the start of the Cultural Revolution, making " link-up " activities across China. He had quickly, however, become sickened by the chaos and corruption on all sides and, while retaining a firm belief in Marxism, had developed " a deep sense of anger towards the bureaucrats." His first real confrontation with authority came in 1973, when a letter written by him to his brother,

[41] Zhu Jianbin's article, " Zhongjian xingtai jiqi fazhan qushi," appears in *Minzhu Zhonghua* (Hong Kong, 1982), pp. 439–57, which is the best and most comprehensive anthology of writings from the Democracy Movement yet produced. Huang Shi's article " Jianli renmin zibenzhuyi, tongxiang shehuizhuyi " (" Establish people's capitalism, and move towards socialism ") was published in the Peking unofficial journal *Ren* (Man), in Jan. 1981.

[42] See " Trotskyism in the eyes of the Chinese Democratic Movement " by Xing Ying, *Shiyue Pinglun* (Hong Kong), Vol. 8, No. 10–11, pp. 68–71.

[43] For text of He Qiu's autobiography, see *Guanchajia*, Oct. 1980; an English summary of the article appears in *Intercontinental Press/Inprecor*, 24 Sept. 1980, pp. 1000–1001.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

containing a series of criticisms of current policy, was intercepted by the Peking public security organs. Denounced as a counter-revolutionary, he spent the following three years in detention undergoing re-education through labour, and was only partially rehabilitated in April 1979.

Early on in the Democracy Movement, He Qiu became involved in running the Canton unofficial journal *Voice of the People*, but left that journal along with a couple of friends in September 1979 to found a new publication, *Road of the People*. In January 1980, the three south China journals *Road of the People, Life* and *Surge* distributed throughout the country a " Message to China's People-Run Publications."[44] The " Message " called for the founding of a national journal, and for a united campaign to achieve the official registration of all unofficial journals with the publishing authorities so that the journals could be run strictly within the terms of the Constitution (the Democracy Movement continually evoked in its own defence Article 45 of the Constitution of the PRC, which stipulates that citizens enjoy the right to freedom of speech, publication, association and assembly).

This proposal to form a national journal was a highly controversial one, implying as it did the adoption of more militant tactics and a more assertive stance towards the bureaucracy. It posed a formidable challenge to the authorities, and as such was not immediately welcomed by all sections of the Democracy Movement.

" What is to be done? " asked the authors of the " Message ":

> It took several decades for the combined effort of tens of millions of people to turn the " sick man of Asia " into a nation of influence. Our publications will require two, three, five or maybe even ten years of tireless effort to survive. But moral preparation is not enough. We must fight. To this end, conditions more favourable to the struggle must be created, and at present the main concern should be with getting our publications registered legally.

Unofficial journals throughout China had been attempting without success to register themselves with the appropriate authorities since early 1979. The publishing authorities maintained that the " Temporary Regulations governing the publishing, printing and distribution of books and periodicals," promulgated by the State Council in 1952, still remained in force. According to these Regulations, journals were required to secure the sponsorship of two private enterprises before they could be officially registered; fulfilment of this criterion had, however, clearly been impossible ever since the collectivization of private enterprise in the mid-1950s. In the latter part of 1980, a nationwide unofficial campaign was promoted calling for the drawing up of a new and comprehensive law which would specifically guarantee the independent publishing rights of the people. This culminated, in December 1980, in the drafting of a " Publishing, Printing and Distribution Law of the PRC " by " 22 citizens of Peking University," led by Fang Jue and Fang

[44] For text of the " Message," see *Le Matin* of 6 Feb. 1980.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Zhiyuan (a prominent candidate in the recent direct election there).[45] This draft law was distributed throughout China, largely via the informal network of the Democracy Movement, in a drive to collect signatures of support prior to the submission of the document to the Legal Commission of the National People's Congress.

THE authors of the " Message " from Canton asserted that since the strength of an isolated journal was almost insignificant, the campaign for official registration would have to be conducted on a national basis:

> At present we must unite to win the freedom to publish, to allow our publications to survive. The guerrilla tactics of those who act only on their own behalf will lead to the defeat of our publications one by one.

The call for the creation of a national grouping was supported by unofficial organizations from many cities in China: Shanghai, Kaifeng, Changsha, Changchun, Ningbo, Anyang, Wuhan, Qingdao, Guiyang, Wenzhou and Shaoguan (but apparently by none from Peking at first). The All-China Association of the People's Press was formally inaugurated in August 1980, shortly after the arrest and brief detainment of its main organizers, and the first of at least nine issues of the new national unofficial journal *Zeren* (Responsibility) was published the same month. This journal, able to draw upon the best writings from nearly 30 other Democracy Movement journals, maintained a high editorial standard and, while standing squarely on the side of the reform faction in the Party, adopted a consistently militant posture towards the conservative bureaucracy. Subsequently, there also emerged a " North-China Association of the People's Press."

In a report delivered to the First Congress of the All-China Association on 15 September 1980, He Qiu remarked that the present Chinese leadership had encountered two massive obstacles in the course of its efforts to carry out democratic reform and promote the rapid development of the productive forces: first, " the ossified bureaucracy securely placed at all levels of the leadership," and second " the masses, who have experienced a profound loss of their former political trust and enthusiasm."[46] Before these two obstacles, stated He Qiu, " All initiatives from above to below are rendered quite powerless; only a democracy movement, unfolded on a broad and wide-ranging basis, possesses the capacity to make the ossified bureaucracy wake up to reality and concede power." The unofficial press had a vital role to play in this process, for " A single people's publication exerts an influence way beyond that of a Zhang Zhixin! "[47] He Qiu regarded the Democracy

[45] For text of this draft publication law, see *Qishi Niandai* March 1981; see also "Preliminary study for a press law " by Zhang Zonghou, in Shanghai official journal *Minzhu yu Fazhi*, Nov. 1980, for description of official guidelines for a new publication law (summarized in *JPRS* 77613, No. 171 pp. 38–41).

[46] See *Guanchajia*, Nov. 1980 for text of major documents from the First Congress of the All-China Association of the People's Press.

[47] See Note 23 above.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Movement itself as suffering from two internal weaknesses which it should strive to overcome—individualism and reformism. The former consisted in people entering the movement for unprincipled and self-seeking purposes, the latter in adherence to strategies upholding the interests not of the masses but, in the final analysis, of the embattled bureaucracy. The common feature of these two weaknesses was that both, if unchecked, would lead to the Democracy Movement " losing the masses."

THE inauguration of the All-China Association of the People's Press coincided with the outbreak of the Polish Solidarity movement, and the Democracy Movement as a whole drew considerable inspiration from events in Poland. In Taiyuan in the winter of 1980, for example, 3000 steel workers united to protest against harsh living conditions, and submitted a programme of " Ten Demands " to the works leadership. A local unofficial journal, *Fengfan* (Wind against the Waves), commented as follows, in a report on events at the steel plant:

> The actions of these . . . workers are proof that the working class of our country has reawakened. On the surface it would seem that they are merely out to protect their own legal rights. But in reality they have voted for democracy, whether they are aware of it or not. They know that if they want change, they must rely on their own power of organization and on their own elected representatives, for no messiah will achieve change for them. And if those they elect no longer represent them, then the election must be reheld. The demands of broad sectors of the people are the social base upon which democratic change in our country will be founded.[48]

In the same issue of this journal there appeared an interview with one of the leaders of these steel workers, Mao Wensheng, together with a translation of both the " Charter of Workers' Rights " from the Polish dissident journal *Robotnik*, and the " 21 Demands " as put forward by Polish Solidarity in August 1980. Early in 1981, the official press in Wuhan reported that a small group of students had led moves to establish Polish-style free trade unions, and warned that the aim of such people was to lead the country into chaos by shaking off Party leadership.[49] Moreover, demands for independent trade unions by workers in Shanghai and Xian during this period culminated in actual strikes.

The official response to events in Poland was ambivalent and muted—although the birth of Solidarity tended to confirm certain aspects of China's long-standing critique of the Soviet Union, at the same time it offered the disturbing prospect of a similar scenario being enacted in China. Official commentary on the Polish crisis suggested an oscillation between the desire to make concessions to grass-roots aspirations, and thereby allay the social causes of civil discontent, and the impulse to

[48] Translation taken from *Wild Lilies, Poisonous Weeds*, op. cit. p. 121.

[49] See English-language edition of the Hong Kong *Monthly Bulletin on the Chinese Democratic Movement* (issue from early 1981, no date, p. 7).

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

employ repressive tactics in order to nip in the bud any threatening independent activity.[50] Part of the official dilemma over the reporting of events in Poland was that while the reform faction may have wished to highlight these events, as a way of shocking the Party bureaucracy into supporting structural reforms, nonetheless the neutral presentation of news about Poland also tended to encourage further the growth of unofficial tendencies in society. The following was one of the last items to appear in the pages of *April 5th Forum*, and reveals the deep impact which the Polish events made upon China's Democracy Movement[51]:

> To our dear brothers, the workers of Poland:
>
> Your strike actions and general struggle have secured a great victory, one which has become the focus of world attention. This victory has demonstrated the tremendous power of the new class awakening generated by working-class solidarity . . . and shows clearly that proletarian-democratic revolution is an inevitable trend in historical development. It has broken through national boundaries, and is of far-reaching international significance. We of the young generation of the working class in China congratulate you, and express to you our deepest respects. We wish you continuous progress towards the goal of democratic socialism!
>
> Editorial Board of *April 5th Forum*,
> Peking, China,
> September 1980.

In retrospect, the formation of the All-China Association of the People's Press appears as a bold but somewhat desperate last bid for survival by the Democracy Movement in the face of mounting pressure from the authorities. In April 1981, the movement saw its offer to cooperate with the reform faction in the Party flung back in its face. Pressure from the Party bureaucracy and from the still left-leaning army had for some time been forcing the leadership towards ever greater compromises over the issue of structural political reform, and towards moves which would eradicate the supposed threat to law and order posed by the Democracy Movement. The claim by many in the movement that a new " bureaucratic class " existed in China aroused fierce antagonism from the Party,[52] and was one of the main factors leading to the movement's final suppression. Central Committee " Document No. 9," released some time during the first weeks of 1981, called for the Party to put an end to all " illegal organizations and publications "—the arrest began immediately after the fifth anniversary of the Tian An Men riots, and within a couple of weeks almost 30 of the leading writers and activists of the Democracy

[50] For a detailed official account and analysis of the Polish events, see *Qishi Niandai*, April 1981, pp. 35–40, " Zhonggong cong ' Bolan Shijian ' xiqu jiaoxun " (reprint of a restricted circulation document issued by the Propaganda Department of an unspecified Provincial Party Committee).

[51] Text published in Peking unofficial journal *April 5th Forum*, no. 18, Nov. 1980; the editorship of this journal had by this time passed from Xu Wenli to Yang Jing.

[52] See, for example, *Hong Qi* (Red Flag), No. 5, 1981, " In criticism of the opposition to the ' bureaucratic class,' " by Lin Boye and Zhong Zhe; for English summary of the article, see *Inside China Mainland*, May 1981, pp. 7–8.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Movement were behind bars. The movement was smashed, and any remaining activities were driven underground. Shortly before his own arrest, Fu Shenqi, editor of *Responsibility*, had written:

> We believe that *Responsibility* will become the banner of the struggle for democracy and legality in China. So long as these goals remain unrealized, *Responsibility* will continue to exist. The banner will fall from the hands of some, but will go up again in the hands of others. People are needed to shoulder this historical responsibility and there is certainly no lack of such people.[53]

In August 1981, in an interview with a Canadian journalist, an activist from a former Democracy Movement publication stated that the organizational framework of some unofficial journals still existed, and that present activities were centred around giving assistance to the families of those still in prison—the movement, although currently dormant, was awaiting a suitable moment (" within three years at most ") to convene a meeting of delegates from the All-China Association of the People's Press.[54] Since then, little has been heard about the movement, although there have been sporadic reports recently of the occasional appearance of one or two new unofficial journals. The suppression of the Democracy Movement carries disturbing implications for the credibility of attempts in China since the Third Plenum to discard the Maoist style of " rule by man " in favour of the principle of " rule by law." As the harsh nature of the sentences imposed in 1982 on several of the movement's leading figures—10 years for He Qiu, 14 years for Wang Xizhe and 15 years for Xu Wenli—demonstrates, law as administered by a judiciary still firmly under Party control is very much a two-edged sword.

IN a series of crackdowns against the Democracy Movement, and in a mounting propaganda barrage against " anarchism," " ultra-democracy " and " ultra-individualism," the authorities sought to link the activities of the movement with a rising wave of urban crime and violence which reflected the negative side of official liberalization.

While there was indeed a sense in which the two were linked, the connection was an indirect and in no way causal one. Rather, it was to be found in the diametrically opposed responses of two minority sections of the " lost generation " to the social limbo to which they had been consigned, albeit unintentionally, by the official rejection of Cultural Revolutionary values. For the new ethos of material growth and social stability as symbolized by the " Four Modernizations " policy, and the corresponding reinstatement of educational achievement and technical skill as the key factors in determining social prestige and individual advancement came as cold comfort to a generation which had ironically had its own educational prospects terminated by the egalitarian slogans of the Cultural Revolution. The fact that the " thinking generation " was

[53] See English-language edition of the Hong Kong *Monthly Bulletin on the Chinese Democratic Movement*, Vol. 1, No. 4, p. 3 (orig. article dated 20 March 1981).

[54] see report in *Zhongguo Minzhu Yungdong Meiyue Tongxun*, Vol. 1, No. 9, p. 6

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

able to rise above its own sense of social alienation, and strive to create in the Democracy Wall its own *al fresco* forum for participating in the socialist renewal of China, did not prevent another minority section of youth from reacting bitterly to its predicament and venting its frustration against society in acts of crime and violence.

However, there is also a sense in which the mere appearance of independent " mass " activity was sufficient to send shivers of apprehension down the collective spine of a Party establishment which had only recently, in the wake of the awesome " extensive democracy " of the Cultural Revolution, succeeded in reinstating a measure of social stability. The suppression of the Democracy Movement was, on this level, an allergic reaction on the part of the authorities to the mere presence of incipient grass-roots autonomy—a reaction which failed to differentiate between the nihilistic rebelliousness of the Red Guard era and the spirit of social responsibility and creativity embodied in the Democracy Movement.

On another, more down-to-earth level, the suppression of the movement reflected quite directly the self-interest of a large section of the Party bureaucracy. For the main target of the reforms demanded by both the unofficial Democracy Movement and the official " movement for the emancipation of the mind," has been the enormous dead-weight formed in the Chinese body politic by the conservative bureaucracy. The reform faction in the Party, although now occupying the commanding heights of the political and economic structure, is at the same time somewhat powerless in the face of the obstructive tactics of the bureaucracy (which remains, of course, the sole vehicle for implementing the current ambitious programme for economic and political reform), and the Democracy Movement was one of the first objects to be sacrificed upon the altar of a workable Party unity. This measure did not, however, resolve the underlying dilemma, the more long-term problem of the institutional and factional constraints upon reform. While this is not the place to describe the complex twists and turns taken by Chinese politics over the past three years, a brief overview of the most recent events may nonetheless be appropriate.

IN essence, certain cracks have begun to appear in the broad Party coalition which formed around Deng Xiaoping and his followers during his successful power struggle against Hua Guofeng, Wang Dongxing and the other " whateverists " at the Third Plenum of December 1978. In the latter half of 1983, one such crack threatened to assume the proportions of a major split (although ideological healing balm subsequently prevented this from happening). During the summer and autumn of 1983, a continued campaign to build " socialist spiritual civilization " (as a means of filling the ethical vacuum left by the debunking of Cultural Revolutionary values) developed into a shrill, puritanical campaign against " spiritual pollution," aimed at curtailing the growing influence upon China's population of Western " bourgeois "

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

life-styles and ideas. Though this could simply have constituted a minor policy aberration, or even a " necessary " temporary corrective to some of the social consequences of rapid economic reform and greater contact with the West in recent years, it in fact culminated in a major, doctrinaire leftist attack by one section of the reform coalition, headed by Propaganda Minister Deng Liqun, against another section, comprising leading ideologists who had begun to explore the far-reaching but highly sensitive topic of " alienation under socialism," and to call for the development of a " socialist humanism." The most senior of the latter, Zhou Yang, has written as follows:

> Socialist society is greatly superior to capitalist society, but this is not to say that socialist society has no alienation. Because we had no experience of economic work, and failed to recognize the realm of necessity in socialist reconstruction, we did many stupid things in the past for which we later suffered the consequences; this is alienation in the economic sphere. Because of imperfections in our democracy and our legal system, the servants of the people may sometimes abuse the power conferred upon them by the people, and so turn into their masters; this is alienation in the political sphere—the alienation of power. As for alienation in the ideological sphere, the most typical manifestation is the cult of the individual, which in many ways resembles the religious alienation criticized by Feuerbach. Thus, alienation is an objective fact . . . Only by first acknowledging the existence of such alienation will we be able to overcome it.[55]

These themes mesh closely with those of the now-banned Democracy Movement, and provide authoritative evidence (if any be needed) of the validity and relevance of its central concerns. In the event, the excesses of the anti- " spiritual pollution " campaign were curbed by the top Party leadership, and Party unity was re-established by shifting the focus of debate away from ideological and political matters and back on to the economic reforms—which seem (despite, for example, the radical de-collectivization of agriculture which they involve) to be a subject of far less contention within the Party. But the topics of " socialist humanism " and " alienation under socialism " are no longer regarded as acceptable areas of investigation, and it seems clear that the workable Party unity required for the leadership's main priority, economic reform, is attainable only at the cost of considerable compromise over political and ideological matters. Perhaps the primary contention of the Democracy Movement—and one which has been indirectly endorsed by the official reformers too—was that political modernization, or democracy, forms the " fifth " modernization upon which the other four (economic) ones all ultimately depend.[56] At present, the Party's attempt to solve the political problem is taking the form of a three-year " Rectification Campaign " (begun in October 1983), whose purpose is to expel corrupt

[55] *Renmin Ribao* (People's Daily), 16 March 1983.

[56] The originator of this idea was Wei Jingsheng; see his " The Fifth Modernization," in the volume of the same title edited by James D. Seymour, pp. 47–69.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and/or leftist members, and to unify the Party ideologically on the basis of the recent writings of Deng Xiaoping. It has been stressed that this is to be a strictly internal affair, carried out from above to below, and certainly not a rectification of the " open-door" type whereby citizens are invited to express their criticisms of the Party and its membership.

But how far can such Party rectification, the attempted self-regeneration of a partially divided monolith, actually succeed, and what are the broader implications of the matter? It seems appropriate to let the Democracy Movement be heard here. As Wang Xizhe wrote in 1980, in *Mao Zedong and the Cultural Revolution:*

> The victory of October 1976 was won by a united front of all those forces opposed to the Gang of Four. But after victory, splits were inevitable. The first split [i.e. at the Third Plenum] came over the question of reform: here the group around Wang Dongxing, which was opposed to the Gang of Four but not to Mao, came out against Deng Xiaoping and the reformers. The second split, which has not yet happened, will be over how far reform should go.
>
> Right now Deng Xiaoping is in the same position as was Khrushchev in 1965 . . . [For] the opportunists are bound to unite in defence of their power. When the pragmatists defeated the dogmatists, the opportunists stood by with folded arms, since that struggle did not touch their vital interests. Even if ninety-nine of Mao's hundred principles were discarded it would not matter to them one jot. But now their privileges are threatened, they too rally to the great banner of Mao Zedong.
>
> The party reformers should understand that if they duck an open and scientific discussion of events and experience since the CPSU's 20th Congress, especially the failure of Khrushchev's reforms, then some day they will be attacked as Chinese Khrushchevs by the joint armies of dogmatism and opportunism. This struggle has not yet come, but it will come. " The wind will not subside just because the tree is tired." Human will cannot avert class struggle. But when the struggle comes, the Party reformers, the young democrats and the Chinese people will once again join hands.[57]

The impulse towards mass participation in the political process is part of Mao's contradictory legacy to the Chinese people, and has taken deep root amongst sections of the young in particular. The Democracy Movement in a sense represented the attempt to find a " third way " towards the goal of participatory politics, one lying somewhere between the anarchic direct action of the Cultural Revolution and the drab but heroic isolation of Soviet-style dissidence. The attempt failed, but the impulse surely remains. Sadly, though, Wang Xizhe's scenario for a solution to the underlying problems of reform—an eventual resuscitation of the dual strategy of " from above to below, and from below to above "—seems less likely, in the long run, than that the Party reformers

[57] Translation taken from *Wild Lilies, Poisonous Weeds*, op. cit.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

will simply compromise with the " opportunists," and expel the " dogmatists," and that the Party as a whole will then soldier on, jealously guarding its absolute monopoly of power.

INTERNATIONAL REVIEW OF ECONOMICS AND BUSINESS

RIVISTA INTERNAZIONALE
DI
SCIENZE ECONOMICHE
E
COMMERCIALI

an academic monthly published since 1954, edited by Tullio Bagiotti for thirty years

The Rivista Internazionale has published over 36,000 pages of important essays. Scholars of international standing, of both the current and the previous generation are among the contributors.

To name just a few: **Adelman, Allais, Angell, Arndt, Bagiotti, Bauer, Baumol, Beckmann, Bronfenbrenner, Burns, Chamberlin, Demaria, Fabricant, Frisch, Gerschenkron, Harriss, Johnson, Kenen, Knight, Machlup, Mahr, Marchal, Markham, von Mises, Metzler, Myrdal, Papandreou, Perroux, Preiser, Röpke, Rosenstein-Rodan, Rueff, Samuelson, Schultz, Schneider, Shoup, Suranyi-Unger, Sylos Labini, Tinbergen, Tsuru, Weber.**

The majority of the articles are in English: those in another language have an English résumé.

Subscription rate: 50 US dollars Full collection available, also cloth-bound

Editorial and Administrative Offices: Via P. Teulié 1, 20136 Milano (Italy)

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Eastern Europe Before Cominform

The Democratic Interlude in Post-War Hungary

Charles Gati

> *" The policy and practice of the Russian government has always been to push forward its encroachments as fast and as far as the apathy or want of firmness of other governments would allow it to go, but always to stop and retire when it was met with decided resistance, and then to wait for the next favourable opportunity to make another spring on its intended victim."*
>
> **Palmerston, 22 May 1853.**

ALTHOUGH Hungarian political life during the short-lived democratic interlude—from late 1944 to late 1947—was quite complex, its basic features can be easily summarized.

For three years, Hungary was governed by a broadly-based coalition government composed of representatives from several non-communist parties, from the inter-war regime of Admiral Miklos Horthy, and just a few members of the small Hungarian Communist Party, even as the country—Hitler's last satellite—was being controlled by the Red Army primarily through the Allied Control Commission. As in Czechoslovakia, Austria and Finland, but nowhere else in Soviet-occupied Europe, Hungary was allowed to hold free elections in November 1945, which confirmed the communists' minority status. They received only 17 per cent of the votes cast by contrast to the 57 per cent in favour of the immensely popular Smallholders' Party alone. Reflecting the outcome of the elections, both the coalition government and the National Assembly were headed by leaders of the Smallholders' Party, and when the Hungarian Republic was formally proclaimed on 1 February 1946 yet another leader of the same non-communist majority party also became the country's President. Until the autumn of 1947, Hungarian political life displayed many of the virtues of political democracy: the composition of the government mirrored the election results, the press was almost free, the National Assembly openly debated controversial issues, the economy was mainly in private hands and based on market forces, the stock-market flourished. Indeed, it was only after the Prime Minister and the Speaker of the Assembly were forced into exile, after the President began to lose his authority, and the Communist Information Bureau (Cominform) was founded in the Polish town of Szklarska Poreba—all of which happened in the summer and autumn of 1947—that Hungary's democratic interlude gave way to communist hegemony. Czechoslovakia was to follow suit after the communist *coup d'état* of February 1948.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

This article, by offering new details about the beginning and the end of Hungary's democratic interlude, raises two questions of interpretation: why was the communist take-over of Hungary as gradual as it was, and why did it end when it did (sooner than planned)? Put in a broader context, why did Moscow prescribe a relatively long democratic interlude in Hungary (and Czechoslovakia) while engineering far more rapid take-overs elsewhere?

Stalin's Vision Of Post-War Europe

As the Second World War was coming to an end, Stalin's foreign policy objectives developed within a framework of conflicting imperatives and inhibitions. On the one hand, the Soviet Union's new European geopolitical position offered the historic opportunity to realize Moscow's long-suppressed desire to expand " socialism in one country " into " socialism in one region," an opportunity pointing towards the adoption of an assertive foreign policy. On the other hand, Stalin's apprehension over potential Western countermeasures—and, to a lesser extent, his view that some of the European countries were not yet ripe for revolution—was an inhibiting factor.

The consequence of such conflicting circumstances and calculations was a highly differentiated Soviet policy towards Europe.[1]

Given the evidence of his negotiating positions in the autumn of 1944 and his subsequent policies too, Stalin seems to have regarded it both premature and counter-productive for all the communist parties to adopt a uniformly militant approach even in what would soon be called the " people's democracies " of Eastern and East-Central Europe. Although his ultimate objective was surely the establishment of the Soviet Union as the predominant European power, Stalin was prepared to pursue that objective gradually. Accordingly, he appears to have envisaged a Europe made up of three political zones or spheres:

1. a non-communist, relatively stable zone in Western Europe, one that would also include Greece;
2. a communist zone under Soviet control in Eastern Europe—along the vital routes to Germany and the Balkans—that would range from Poland and the eastern part of Germany to the Black Sea states of Romania and Bulgaria;
3. an intermediate zone in East-Central Europe of coalitional political systems under only gradually increasing communist influence, extending from Yugoslavia in the south through Austria, Hungary and Czechoslovakia to Finland in the north.

[1] Cf. Geir Lundestad, *The American Non-Policy Towards Eastern Europe, 1943–1947* (Humanities Press, New York, 1975), especially pp. 435–450. Lundestad speaks of Moscow's " outer sphere " (countries not occupied by the Red Army); the " middle sphere " (Austria, Finland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Albania and East Germany); the " inner sphere " (Poland, Romania and Bulgaria); and the " absolute sphere " (parts of Finland ceded by the Finns in 1940, the three Baltic states of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, Poland to the Curzon Line, and Bessarabia). See also footnote 12 below.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

For the time being, Western Europe—the first zone—was not only beyond Stalin's reach, it was also beyond his ambitions. Seeking a measure of stability in Western Europe to divert attention from the Sovietization of Eastern Europe, Stalin was especially eager to provide no reason for the United States to remain active in Europe after the war and involve itself in the political affairs of the continent. For this reason, Stalin instructed the powerful French and Italian communist parties to avoid all provocative actions and concentrate instead on such innocuous tasks as the reconstruction of their countries' war-torn economies and administrative structures. Stalin's concerns—that communist-inspired instability in Western Europe would prompt active US involvement in the affairs of the region and that such an involvement would in turn pose a threat to vital Soviet interests in Eastern Europe—were expressed by Maurice Thorez, leader of the French communists, who pointedly told his more militant comrades that " Anglo-American troops [would] intervene if the Communists should come to power in France."[2]

Whether any of the communist parties of Western Europe could have seized power in the autumn of 1944 or early 1945 remains an unanswerable question. It is a fact, however, that after 1941 the Italian and the French communist parties constituted the largest force within the anti-Nazi resistance during the Second World War, and they emerged from the war well organized and quite popular. By professing to fight for national survival and national independence rather than for revolutionary objectives, they had effectively removed the stigma from the communist name and thus qualified themselves for participation in a broadly-based, democratic coalition government. That they chose to join the post-war governments and postponed all attempts to seize power was not because a communist-led revolution was definitely destined to fail, but because Stalin settled on a Popular Front or " moderate " strategy for them in order to placate the United States and Great Britain and in order to divert attention from what was happening in Eastern Europe.

IN the second zone, for which Stalin had envisaged Soviet dominance at the earliest possible moment, coalition governments of " national unity " came into being in 1944–45 as they did elsewhere in Europe—but they were coalitions in name only. With a few notable exceptions, the bogus coalition governments in Poland, Romania and Bulgaria—as well as in the Soviet-occupied part of Germany—typically included only such non-communists as the local communist parties deemed acceptable: fellow-travellers and political chameleons like the Pole Jozef Cyrankiewicz, nominally a socialist, or the Romanian Petru Groza, nominally of the " Ploughmen's Front."[3] Even though a few courageous Agrarian leaders, such as Stanislaw Mikolajczyk in Poland, Iuliu Maniu in Romania and

[2] As quoted in Fernando Claudin, *The Communist Movement: From Comintern to Cominform* (Monthly Review Press, New York, 1975), Part Two, p. 336.

[3] The term " bogus coalition " was first used by Hugh Seton-Watson in *The East European Revolution* (Praeger, New York, 1956; third ed.), p. 170.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Nikola Petkov in Bulgaria, refused to give up or fade away for some time to come, the communists in fact obtained controlling influence in the wake of the Red Army's arrival almost at once. In contrast to what was happening elsewhere in Europe—and in contrast to the soothing language of democracy and parliamentarism that was deceptively employed in these countries as well—truly competitive elections were not allowed to be held anywhere in this zone; instead, an all-encompassing, communist-dominated bloc of parties—the Government Front in Poland and Romania, the Fatherland Front in Bulgaria—was to " win " putative elections whose outcome had been predetermined.

IN East-Central Europe—that intermediate zone of states for which Stalin had envisaged coalition governments without communist hegemony as yet—the trend of events was more ambiguous than elsewhere in Europe, the results rather mixed. Although their political standing varied from country to country, by 1947 all of the communist parties in this zone—with the notable exception of the Yugoslav Party—had witnessed the erosion of their popular appeal, all had suffered setbacks, all had managed to alienate both Western and domestic opinion. Except for Yugoslavia, which was a source of different problems for Moscow, the communists could neither consolidate their power nor keep the post-war spirit of national and international cooperation intact, developments that called into question the continued wisdom of Stalin's incremental strategy.

Specifically, three trends emerged within the zone:

1. In Yugoslavia, Tito and his colleagues obstructed Stalin's discriminating design by engaging in too much political violence and, indeed, by seizing all power too soon.
2. In Finland and Austria, on the other hand, the initially effective Finnish Party and the consistently hapless Austrian Party simply allowed themselves to be easily outmanoeuvred by their non-communist political opponents, without either gaining a measure of popular support or preparing themselves for the seizure of power later on.
3. In Czechoslovakia and Hungary, the communists had advanced according to Stalin's early expectations after the war, but by 1947 they appeared to be too complacent, and perhaps even somewhat reluctant, to pick up his increasingly militant signals.

In Yugoslavia, Moscow encountered the unique problem of being unable to hold Tito back. What Stalin had sought was a coalition government composed of 12 members of Tito's National Committee and six members of the London-based Royal Yugoslav Government led by Ivan Subasic. But Tito, who was eager to establish the first " dictatorship of the proletariat " outside the Soviet Union, failed to abide either by his own November-December 1944 compromise agreement with Subasic or by the early 1945 Yalta recommendation of the Big Three to put that agreement into effect. Having liberated Yugoslavia without much outside

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

help, and certainly without much Soviet help, Tito implicitly rejected the 1944 Churchill-Stalin percentage deal that assigned 50 per cent influence in Yugoslavia to Moscow and 50 per cent to the West; he did not have much patience with Stalin's " capitulationist " politics of gradualism. (Years later, in 1947, Tito reportedly confided to a small group of Hungarian communist leaders that, " Comrade Stalin was too cautious after the war. He should have let the French and Italian comrades seize power the way we did—and he didn't like what we were doing either."[4])

In Finland, where the Soviet-dominated Allied Control Commission frequently intervened on its behalf, the Communist Party gained 51 of the 200 seats in the diet of 1945. However, facing a surprisingly determined group of democratic parties,[5] the communists suffered significant losses in subsequent elections. They opted for a more militant strategy in the winter of 1947–48—as did all the other European communist parties—but the communists' *coup* that was planned to take place in the spring of 1948 failed and in its aftermath their political fortunes further declined.

In Austria, the communists emerged in the shadow of the Red Army. As elsewhere in Soviet-occupied Europe, they took control of the Ministry of the Interior in the otherwise respectable and broadly-based coalition government formed in April 1945 and headed by a Socialist, Karl Renner. Expecting to share power with the Big Two of Austrian politics, the People's Party and the Socialists, the Communist Party could instead gain only four seats in the Nationalrat in the November 1945 elections, while the People's Party won 85 and the Socialists 76 seats. Isolated and disappointed, the communists lost the Ministry of the Interior, becoming a marginal if occasionally troublesome factor in Austrian politics. For want of a better alternative that Stalin would approve, they continued to participate in the work of the government—holding on to the insignificant Ministry of Power and Electrification—but the Party's posture as a willing partner in the coalition soon gave way to an increasingly confrontationist stance. Apparently with Soviet approval, it made a desperate, all-or-nothing effort to reverse the

[4] During the course of Tito's visit to Hungary on 6–8 December 1947, he held a small, informal meeting with a few Hungarian communist leaders, including Politburo members Erno Gero and Jozsef Revai, at the Yugoslav embassy in Budapest. Gyorgy Heltai, then head of the Political Department of, and the highest ranking communist in, the Foreign Ministry was also present. Stunned by Tito's explicit criticism of Stalin, Heltai asked Revai after the meeting what to make of Tito's remark. " Well, who knows, he may be right, he may be right," said Revai, apparently also puzzled. Story related to me by Heltai. Cf. Alexander Dallin, " The Use of International Movements," in Ivo J. Lederer (ed.), *Russian Foreign Policy: Essays in Historical Perspective* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1962), p. 330 and William O. McCagg, Jr, *Stalin Embattled 1943–1948* (Wayne State University Press, Detroit, 1978), p. 395 (footnote 32).

[5] James H. Billington, " Finland," in Cyril E. Black and Thomas P. Thornton (eds.), *Communism and Revolution: The Strategic Uses of Political Violence* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1964), pp. 117–144. Billington's account of one of the reasons why the Finnish Communist Party failed is worth quoting: " First and perhaps most important was the willingness of its opponents to resort to the same tactics of terror and violence that the Communists themselves employed. This is not a conclusion that is pleasing to the liberal mind; but the fact is that . . . calculated threats of terror by otherwise humane Finns were effective, not particularly bloody, and probably indispensable for the preservation of Finnish democracy " (pp. 130–131).

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

direction of Austrian politics, but the large-scale riots and strikes of September-October 1950, as the 1948 abortive *coup* in Finland, were contained and order restored.

In contrast to Finland and Austria, the Czechoslovak Communist Party was the most popular political party in Czechoslovakia after the Second World War, receiving an astonishing 38 per cent of the vote in free elections held in 1946[6]—a stunning electoral victory that remains a record for a communist party in twentieth-century Europe. Concurrently, the communists infiltrated the several non-communist, democratic parties of the coalition government, and they also dominated the army and the police from the beginning. The commanding position of the Czechoslovak Communist Party was thus unique: it gained an upper hand in the country's parliamentary life by legitimate means and it also controlled and manipulated the coercive levels of power.

Such successes notwithstanding, by 1947 the Party began to lose its early momentum. Public-opinion polls showed a substantial decline in communist support. The Party's congenial allies, the Social Democrats, elected a new leader, Bohumil Lausman, to replace Zdenek Fierlinger, a pro-communist fellow-traveller. Moreover, President Eduard Benes and Foreign Minister Jan Masaryk, the country's preeminent democratic leaders who had cooperated with the communists without always submitting to them, could no longer be expected to make further concessions.

Nor was it clear—until Stalin decided to replace the gradualist approach with a militant strategy in the autumn of 1947—that the Czechoslovak communists actually sought more concessions—more power than they had already accumulated. As elsewhere in the third zone, they still played and seemingly enjoyed the coalitionary game, frequently abiding by constitutional rules and invariably presenting themselves as defenders and promoters of the Czechoslovak national interest. Indeed, in mid-1947, they initially supported the Czechoslovak coalition government's acceptance of the American invitation to attend the Marshall Plan preparatory meeting in Paris—a position that was abruptly countermanded by Stalin and then equally abruptly reversed by the Czechoslovak Communist Party as well.

Yet the Czechoslovak Party adopted a more militant, even insurrectionist strategy only a few months later, after the new Soviet line was put forth at the founding meeting of the Cominform in September. There, the Czechoslovak delegates "were given to understand [by the Soviet representatives] that they had failed to appreciate the consequences of the new situation."[7] By the time they left the meeting, they knew better.

[6] The elections are described and analysed in Paul E. Zinner, *Communist Strategy and Tactics in Czechoslovakia, 1918–1948* (Praeger, New York, 1963), Eduard Taborsky, *Communism in Czechoslovakia* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1961), and Joseph Korbel, *The Communist Subversion of Czechoslovakia 1928–1948: The Failure of Coexistence* (Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1959).

[7] Pavel Tigrid, "The Prague Coup of 1948: The Elegant Takeover," in Thomas T. Hammond (ed.), *The Anatomy of Communist Takeovers* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1975), p. 406. Tigrid's essay is based on secret documents and studies which surfaced during the "Prague Spring" of 1968 in

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Back in Prague, a communist trade union leader immediately conveyed the message to the Party's coalition partners: " If they don't like the slow road, then we can go the quick road,"[8] he exclaimed, suggesting that the democratic parties should rather surrender than invite a civil war. In point of fact, the Communist Party had just decided in favour of the " quick road " and preparations were under way to seize power. In November, at a Central Committee meeting, there was talk of an imminent " government crisis," of " the final round in the struggle to win an absolute majority of the public for the Party's policy."[9] The code words signified the Communist Party's abandonment of the coalitionary strategy and its readiness to rely on force alone. The " final round " came in the form of the successful communist *coup d'état* in February 1948.

Following a strategy identical to the Czechoslovak Party's, the Hungarian communists' quest for power also entailed extensive cooperation with non-communist elements and participation in a national effort to rebuild the country. As described below, this course had been adopted at a series of secret meetings held in Moscow in the autumn of 1944, after consultation with such leaders of the formally disbanded Communist International (Comintern) as Georgi Dimitrov and Dmitri Manuilsky, and with Stalin himself. The Hungarian communists were told at that time that since Moscow's primary aim was the rapid Sovietization of Poland (combined with the dismemberment of, and eventual control over, Germany), they had to act in such a way as to placate Western concerns and suspicions.[10] Accordingly, at the first Central Committee meeting held in Soviet-liberated Budapest on 23 January 1945, the Party's second-in-command, Erno Gero, explained the Polish trade-off to a group of puzzled communist leaders by referring to the complex " international situation " in general and the Churchill-Stalin percentage agreement in particular. " The Soviet Union must win the diplomatic battle in order to obtain decisive influence in Hungary," said Gero, concluding that Hungarian communists must " not scare the Anglo-

---

Czechoslovakia; the most revealing of these documents and studies was prepared for publication by Karel Kaplan and Vaclav Pavlicek. Another study—Vladimir V. Kusin, " Czechoslovakia," in Martin McCauley (ed.), *Communist Power in Europe 1944–1948* (Harper & Row, New York, 1977), pp. 73–94—provides this account of the Czechoslovak Communist Party's follow-up to the Cominform session (p. 82):

> Slansky reported on the constituent meeting to the Czechoslovak Politburo on 2 October 1947. According to one writer he only communicated the need for an escalation of the struggle and for a further strengthening of Communist positions in the armed forces and police (i.e. in typically non-parliamentary, direct-action fields). According to another report the subject of his communication was " sharp criticism of the Czechoslovak party by the Cominform for overestimating parliament, for coining the erroneous slogan, ' for the majority of the nation ' etc." Even if we concede that all this evidence does not quite dovetail, one cannot have much doubt that the setting up of the Cominform and general hardening of Soviet ideological and political postulates at this juncture must have affected Gottwald's policy towards a more radical resolution of the power question in the country.

[8] Korbel, op. cit. pp. 205–206.

[9] Tigrid, op. cit. p. 409.

[10] Information by Zoltan Vas, Matyas Rakosi's close associate for over 30 years who spent the war years (1941–1944) in Moscow in Rakosi's entourage. Stalin's " Polish trade-off " was also indicated by Gero (footnote 11, below). See also footnote 35, below.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Americans " for the time being.[11] The Party was not expected to achieve hegemony in less than 10 to 15 years.[12]

Although it could gain only 17 per cent of the vote in the free 1945 national elections—in contrast to the Smallholders' Party's 57 per cent—the Communist Party was to acquire far more influence than its popular appeal would have warranted. Ranging from persuasion to intimidation and coercion, the technique it most skilfully applied was known as the " salami tactics," which signified the Party's ever-increasing demands to remove step-by-step—or slice-by-slice—elements it deemed undesirable from the coalition. In 1945, it was the leftovers of the inter-war regime of Miklos Horthy; in 1946, it was the so-called right wing of the Smallholders' Party, led by Dezso Sulyok, and of the Social Democrats, led by Karoly Peyer; in 1947, it was Bela Kovacs, the Smallholders' popular Secretary-General, followed by Zoltan Pfeiffer's troublesome faction, followed by the centrist Prime Minister, Ferenc Nagy, and others. In each case, the Communist Party reiterated its long-term commitment to political cooperation and harmony within the coalition, adding, however, that first these " reactionary " and " anti-democratic " politicians must be dismissed from positions of influence. The " salami tactics " turned out to be effective, not only because the communists could claim the suport of the Soviet occupation forces, but also because some of the non-communist leaders were not unwilling to acquiesce in the removal of a competing faction within their parties from political life.

The Communist Party's successes in dividing its adversaries through the " salami tactics " and its advance towards hegemony notwithstanding, the highly competitive national elections of 31 August 1947—in which it received 22 per cent of the vote—served as a reminder of its limited appeal. At Party headquarters, the atmosphere was gloomy, the leadership embarrassed and bewildered; it seemed as if the whole post-war coalitionary strategy had suddenly collapsed.[13] Publicly, the Party claimed victory, but it was hard to explain away 78 per cent of the non-communist vote. Moreover, because of extensive cheating, especially in the countryside, it was widely believed that the communists had

[11] As quoted in Mihaly Korom, *Magyarorszag ideiglenes nemzeti kormanya es a fegyverszunet (1944–1945)* (Hungary's Provisional National Government and the Armistice (1944–1945)) (Akademiai Kiado, Budapest, 1981), pp. 390–391.

[12] That the communist take-over in Hungary should occur in " no less than 10 to 15 years " was a key feature of communist planning for the post-war years. The phrase itself was repeated in all of my interviews with high-ranking communist officials, including Vas, Ferenc Donath, Miklos Vasarhelyi and others. When asked at a May 1945 Party *aktiv*, Rakosi also used the phrase. See Gyula Schopflin, " A Magyar Kommunista Part utja, 1945–1950 " (The Path of the Hungarian Communist Party, 1945–1950), *Latohatar* (Munich), Vol. VII, No. 4–5 (July–October 1955), p. 239. During a conversation with four leaders of the small Hungarian Radical Party on 18 April 1945, Rakosi predicted the collapse of the Hungarian bourgeoisie, though not the consolidation of communist authority, in " 10 years." See Imre Csecsy, " A Radikalis Part delegacioja Rakosi Matyasnal " (The Radical Party's Delegation Meets Matyas Rakosi), in *Historia*, Vol. II, No. 2 (1980), pp. 24–25.

[13] Information by Gyorgy Heltai. According to Robert Gabor (who was there), the atmosphere was equally gloomy at the headquarters of AVO, the communist-dominated secret police. Gabor was delegated to the AVO by the Social Democratic Party. A member of that party's right wing and an anti-communist, he had to escape to the United States a few weeks after the elections.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

won far less than the official results showed. On the basis of a confidential secret-police calculation it obtained, the American embassy in Budapest estimated that the actual communist vote was only 7 per cent.[14] Although that estimate was almost certainly too low, the election did demonstrate the inadequacy of the coalition strategy in Hungary—as, indeed, that strategy was found to have been inadequate everywhere else in Stalin's third zone by the autumn of 1947.

Dealing With The Old Order

Stalin's projected policy for Hungary was first confronted in a series of three secret meetings that took place in Moscow in October 1944. One was between the Soviet leadership and an official delegation sent to the Soviet capital by the Regent of old Hungary, Admiral Miklos Horthy. At long last, the Regent seemed ready to conclude an armistice agreement with the Soviet Union.

The delegation appointed by Horthy left for the Soviet Union on 28 September. Headed by Lieutenant-General Gabor Faragho, who was chosen because he had once served as a Hungarian military attaché in Moscow, the delegation also included Domokos Szent-Ivanyi, a diplomat, and Geza Teleki, a distinguished scholar whose father, the Anglophile Prime Minister, had committed suicide in 1941 in protest against the German attack on Yugoslavia through Hungarian territory. The three-man delegation—carrying Horthy's handwritten letter to Stalin which was apparently composed in English by the Regent himself[15]—managed to reach Moscow on 1 October.

[14] Christopher Felix (pseud.), *A Short Course in the Secret War* (E. P. Dutton, New York, 1963), p. 276. " Felix " was the chief US intelligence agent assigned to Budapest in 1946–47. As James G. McCargar, he was a political officer at the US embassy. In an interview, Mr McCargar told me that the estimate was based both on the AVO calculation and on observation by embassy officials. US Ambassador Selden Chapin's 31 August 1947 telegramme to the Department of State provides additional details:

> Legation and US Representative ACC [Allied Control Commission] personnel observing elections blanketed country today and collected overwhelming masses evidence conclusively proving scandalous fraud based on great numbers last-minute disfranchisements amounting to 20 per cent and over in some places, and multiple voting amounting to 25 per cent and above in some localities. This evidence, which includes blue certificates, copies of official protests by all parties participating in elections except Communists, lists of votes cast showing non-resident vote *et cetera*, indicates fraud possibly reaching over 600,000 votes, and is being assembled by Legation now for telegraphic transmission to Department as soon as possible.

Foreign Relations of the United States 1947 (GPO, Washington, 1972), Volume IV, p. 364.

[15] The four-page letter first surfaced in 1969 as a footnote to an article written by a prominent *émigré* historian, Peter Gosztonyi. See his " A magyar-szovjet fegyverszuneti targyalasok (1944. oktober) " (The Hungarian-Soviet Armistice Negotiations (October 1944)), in *Uj Latohatar* (Munich), Vol. XII, No. 5 (November 1969), pp. 401–418. The Regent's letter, which is reprinted below, without his numerous grammatical and spelling errors, appeared on pp. 415–416:

> Field Marshal:
>
> In the name and for the sake of my people in their extreme danger, I address myself to you. I do so in the name of the Hungarian people, who has no responsibility for this war. For a thousand years and particularly during this last decade, the fate of our people has been influenced by the neighbouring German colossus. It was again under this influence that we were carried into this unfortunate war with the Soviet Union.
>
> I must lay particular stress on the fact that my poor country has been practically overrun by the German " Fifth Column." This penetration began on a large scale at the same moment that the German forces marched into Romania and Bulgaria. As a result, every movement and every step in

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Hungarians expected an armistice similar to the "Finnish pattern": the immediate cessation of hostilities, combined with safe exit for the German forces and participation by British and American troops in the country's occupation. At this late date, the Russians found these terms unacceptable. Moreover, the cumbersome process of negotiations made it difficult to narrow the substantive differences. Despite Horthy's letter, the Russians kept questioning the delegation's credentials. Communications with Budapest were frequently interrupted, not only because the Gestapo closely monitored the Regent's activities there but because the delegation had to rely on Soviet radio facilities to reach him. In addition, the Soviet negotiators, Foreign Commissar Vyacheslav Molotov and General F. F. Kuznetsov, did not seem to have full authority either: they kept in constant touch with Stalin (hence the negotiations usually took place at night, Stalin's favourite time for work).

One of the important substantive complications—the source of a fundamental misunderstanding—had to do with a *previous* contact made in mid-September by Horthy's confidant, Count Ladomer Zichy, with Soviet officers then operating in Slovakia.[16] Identified as a certain Colonel Makarov and Captain L. Volyansky, these officers had conveyed rather favourable Soviet terms to Zichy. Specifically, in exchange for breaking relations with Hitler and allowing the entry of Soviet troops into Hungary, Moscow supposedly offered to give Horthy free reign in the country's domestic affairs. On the controversial issue of future borders, Moscow was said to have insisted on the return of all land Hungary had recovered since 1938, adding, however, that only a final peace treaty would establish permanent frontiers. In particular, the Soviet Union appeared to have an open mind about the future of Transylvania.

As the delegation was shocked to learn soon enough, these terms were

---

Hungary has been closely watched by German agents and the most important news and reports have never reached me. I have now come to the knowledge that after the air-attack upon Kassa and Munkacs, Foreign Minister Molotov during a conversation with the Hungarian Minister emphasized the peaceful aims of the Soviet Union towards Hungary. If this was really so, it was fatal that it did not reach me at the time.

For the sake of justice, I would like to inform you that we have never ever wanted to take even a single inch that was not ours by right from anybody. On the contrary, the Romanians took Bessarabia from their Russian ally after the First World War and wished to take an important part of South Russia during the Second World War, with German help. Furthermore, when in 1940 we intended to put an end to the monstrous treatment of the Hungarian people in Transylvania, it was again the Romanians who asked for support from Germany, begging Hitler to help them to retain at least a part of this land by the Vienna Award.

When sending my delegates with full authorization to the armistice negotiations I beg you to spare this unfortunate country which has its own historic merits and whose people has so many affinities with the Russian people. Kindly exercise your great influence upon your allies to make conditions compatible with our peoples' interests and honour, as they really deserve a peaceful life and a safe future. I avail myself of this opportunity to express to you, Field Marshal Stalin, my highest consideration.

Yours truly,

Horthy

PS As our troops are still on the borders and we are invaded by strong German units, I am asking you to treat my letter with discretion, until we are able to master the situation.

[16] The most complete account of Zichy's mission is in Gosztonyi, op. cit. pp. 402 ff. Cf. C. A. Macartney, *October Fifteenth: A History of Modern Hungary, 1929–1945* (The University Press, Edinburgh, 1961; second edition), Vol. II, pp. 349–350. For the Soviet view according to which Stalin did not signal to Horthy through Makarov, see Korom, op. cit. pp. 102 ff.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

not on offer now. On 8 October, at one of those midnight meetings, Molotov summarized Moscow's preliminary conditions in this way: Hungary must evacuate all Romanian, Czechoslovak and Yugoslav territories regained since 1938—including Transylvania, of course—and thus return to " Trianon Hungary " in 10 days, and it must break off all relations with, and immediately declare war on, Germany. Although the Soviet government was prepared to " assist " the Hungarians in the implementation of these measures, the Hungarian delegation was simply dumbfounded: these terms were quite different from those transmitted earlier by Makarov. There was no reference now to the continuity of the political order nor to the possibility of settling the issue of Transylvania later on, and the demand to take up arms against the Germans was both unexpected and even abhorrent. But Molotov could not be moved. Only if Hungary had accepted these preliminary conditions would the Allies discuss the final terms of an armistice. The Hungarians' point that they had flown to Moscow via Slovakia *with Makarov's help* was dismissed as irrelevant. Molotov claimed that he knew nothing about the Makarov contact, that he was not interested in Makarov's professed assertions, and that he had never even heard of Makarov at all.[17]

As three more days of tedious bargaining proved equally futile, a preliminary armistice as presented by Molotov was signed on 11 October. Kuznetsov embraced Faragho. For the first time, Molotov smiled. " We're now allies," he said. But he was wrong. On 14 October, claiming he had promised the Germans in March to give Hitler prior notice before he would seek an armistice, Horthy confided to one of his underlings that, " Under the armistice conditions we must withdraw to the Trianon frontiers and join the Russians in attacking the Germans, but I shall find some way out of that somehow "[18]—a rather strange comment from a man so proud of his sense of honour.

The Germans, who had left Finland under comparable circumstances, did not cooperate this time. They kidnapped the Regent, forcing him to declare his Proclamation null and void and to appoint the lunatic head of the Nazi Arrow Cross Party, Ferenc Szalasi, as Prime Minister. Although the Horthy regime thus formally collapsed, several loyal Hungarian divisions responded to the Proclamation by laying down their arms and joining the anti-German war effort. The senior general of the army, Bela Miklos, issued an order on 21 October in which he referred to Szalasi and his " henchmen " as traitors and Gestapo agents and he called on everyone, soldiers and civilians alike, to turn against Germany and " fight together with the Russian army for Hungary's existence, independence, and honour."

Meanwhile, in Moscow the Russians asked the delegation—renamed the " Hungarian Committee in Moscow "—to help form a new political order on Hungarian soil and it pledged to do so. The new government would begin its activities in Debrecen as soon as possible; it would be

[17] Gosztonyi, ibid. p. 409.
[18] Macartney, op. cit. p. 393.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

composed of anti-Nazi elements; and it would seek to assure cooperation between the Soviet and the Hungarian armies. Asking for further specifics, Molotov raised the issue of the composition of a new " provisional " government. He suggested General Miklos to be its chairman, recommended the cooptation of leaders of the Smallholders' Party and of the Social Democratic Party, and then pointedly asked: " Are you willing to include in the provisional government certain Hungarians residing on Soviet territory? "[19] As the delegation was not told who these Hungarians might be, its response was politely evasive.

Molotov did not press the issue. In line with what they had done in Finland and Romania, the Russians still preferred to create a regime that would suggest a degree of continuity with the past. By relying on the Regent's entourage, and perhaps on the Regent himself, they sought to do what Hitler had done earlier in 1944: occupy Hungary and thus control the main levers of power, but govern through Horthy's established authority. The difficult months and years ahead would be made easier and the changes to be introduced more palatable if the Regent could be persuaded to remain at the helm. Most importantly, Horthy's generals could organize the Hungarian army against Hitler and indeed inspire their troops in a way certainly no communist leader—no " Hungarian residing on Soviet territory "—could possibly do.

By the beginning of December, the initial Soviet vision of Hungarian post-war development was apparently modified. Instead of leaving open the possibility of keeping the Regent in power in order to lend legitimacy to the new post-war order, the Hungarian communists were told to do without him, after all. Stalin called in three leaders of the Hungarian Communist Party—Matyas Rakosi, Erno Gero and Imre Nagy—to inform them of the new Soviet position: " We would have accepted Horthy. But the Germans took him away. They forced him to sign the document [of *de facto* abdication]. Once there is a document, it doesn't matter how it's obtained. Now Horthy is morally dead." In a few days, Molotov followed up by telling the Regent's emissaries, the Faragho-led " Hungarian Committee in Moscow," that from then on the Soviet Union would have " nothing to do " with Horthy.[20]

For some time to come, this was the last change in the increasingly pertinacious Soviet position towards Hungary. At first, as Makarov suggested, Moscow would have accepted an armistice along the Finnish pattern: Horthy stays, the Germans leave, and everything else is subject to negotiations. By the time the Faragho delegation arrived in October, the terms became less flexible: Horthy could still stay, but he must turn against Hitler and accept " Trianon Hungary." By December, after

[19] As quoted in Peter Gosztonyi, " Az Ideiglenes Nemzeti Kormany megalakulasanak elotortenetehez " (To the Prehistory of the Founding of the Provisional National Government), in *Uj Latohatar*, Vol. XV, No. 3 (August 1972), p. 221. Molotov never used the words " Muscovites " or " Communists." He either referred to " persons in Moscow," or to " Hungarians residing on Soviet territory," or " Moscow-based Hungarians."

[20] For the Stalin quotation, see Korom, op. cit. p. 326; for the Molotov quotation, see Tosztonyi, ibid. p. 232.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Horthy had abdicated and after the Red Army had come to control half of Hungary, Stalin made a further adjustment in the Soviet position. His early notion of the " broadest possible anti-German coalition " now gave way to the somewhat narrower " anti-German *and* anti-Horthy coalition," one in which a few leading representatives of the old order could still participate.

Dealing With The West

Coincidentally, though unknown to Hungarian communists at the time, a second series of secret conferences was taking place in October. Accompanied by Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden and others, Churchill arrived in Moscow to discuss with Stalin and Molotov the post-war political orientation of five countries in Eastern and in East-Central Europe—Greece, Bulgaria, Romania, Yugoslavia and Hungary. The first meeting between Churchill and Stalin was held on 9 October; the substance of their famous " percentage agreement " became known with the publication of Churchill's memoirs in 1953.[21] But their encounter was followed by two days of haggling between Eden and Molotov on 10 and 11 October, the details of which came to light only in the mid-1970s.[22]

Churchill was not in a strong position to demand Western influence in Eastern or in East-Central Europe. The United States had rejected his recommendation that parts of this region be liberated by Anglo-American forces. Had his plan been accepted by President Roosevelt, the Red Army might not have been the first to reach the Balkans, Austria, and at least the Western part of Hungary. Now, he could not easily gain at the negotiating table what he had not achieved on the battlefields. Moreover, the United States, and particularly Roosevelt, had never encouraged him to negotiate about " spheres of influence." Washington was always more interested in the broader, more pressing questions of the day, e.g. how to end the war as soon as possible or how to implement the principles of the Atlantic Charter.

Under the circumstances, the issue Churchill faced in Moscow was this: will the Soviet sphere include both Eastern and East-Central Europe, or, alternatively, will Stalin seek a Soviet sphere of exclusive control in Eastern Europe and accept a rather diverse area of states in East-Central

[21] Winston S. Churchill, *Triumph and Tragedy* (Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1953), pp. 227–229. A copy of the agreement is in Churchill's file at the Public Records Office in London (PREM 3/66/7, PRO). For an excellent summary and perceptive interpretation, see Vojtech Mastny, *Russia's Road to the Cold War* (Columbia University Press, New York, 1979), pp. 207–212. See also Albert Reis, " The Churchill-Stalin Percentages Agreement," in *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 83, No. 2 (April 1978), pp. 368–387, Robert Garson, " Churchill's ' Spheres of Influence ': Rumania and Bulgaria," in *Survey*, Vol. 24, No. 3 (Summer 1979), pp. 143–158, and John Lukacs, " The Night Stalin and Churchill Divided Europe," in *The New York Times Magazine*, 5 October 1969, pp. 36–50.

[22] The British record of these two meetings is at the Public Records Office: " Record of Meeting at the Kremlin, Moscow, on 10th October, 1944, at 7 p.m." (PREM 3/343/2) and " Record of Meeting at the Kremlin, Moscow, on 11th October, 1944, at 3 p.m." (PREM 3/434/2). Brief reference to these meetings is made in Anthony Eden, *The Reckoning* (Houghton Mifflin, Boston, 1965), pp. 559–560. For an excellent summary, see Mastny, op. cit. pp. 208–212.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Europe in which the Soviet Union would exercise extensive, but not exclusive, influence?

Highly sceptical of Soviet objectives, Churchill was still determined to probe Stalin's intentions. Not realizing, perhaps, as Elisabeth Barker put it later, " how powerless they [the British] were in the face of the Red Army's advance westwards," Churchill was nevertheless hoping that " there would be some kind of Anglo-Soviet influence-sharing, matched by power-sharing inside those countries between liberals and the Left, between peasant parties, social democrats, and communists."[23] Having all but conceded Poland to Stalin in Teheran two years earlier, in 1943, he was now prepared to concede Soviet control over Romania and Bulgaria too in exchange for British control over Greece, assuming that in Yugoslavia and Hungary—and perhaps elsewhere in East-Central Europe—" some kind of Anglo-Soviet influence-sharing " might be possible. Expressing his idea in percentages, Churchill—writing " on a half-sheet of paper "—presented Stalin with a formula for the distribution of great-power influence after the war.

Molotov's apparent purpose at the follow-up meetings was to increase Soviet influence in Hungary, while Eden—guided by British interests in the Mediterranean—would have preferred to focus on Bulgaria and the Balkans in general. (Neither side brought up Greece and Romania anymore.) Molotov quickly turned to the 50:50 Hungarian deal Stalin and Churchill had made the day before, offering the rather disingenuous argument that, " Marshal Stalin thought that, after learning of the considerable losses sustained by the Red Army in Hungary, the army would not understand it if a principle of 50:50 were allotted." As if Stalin had spent the night consulting " the army "! The British minutes of this meeting then continue: " M. Molotov had been instructed by the Marshal to raise this question and to give his opinion."

A long, rather petty, and somewhat disjointed haggle followed. Much of the time was spent on Bulgaria, with Molotov promising that if the British could only accept a 90:10 distribution of influence in that country, instead of 75:25, " agreement could easily be reached on all the rest." Eden was prepared to go along with the Soviet proposal for the duration of the war, but for the period after Germany's surrender he sought to change what he called the West's " observer status " to " active participation." Not knowing anyhow how this idea could be translated into percentages, though, Eden offered no specific counter-proposal, saying that " all he wanted was a greater share [in Bulgaria] than we already had in Romania . . . which was almost nothing." The assiduous, if surrealistic, babble about percentages which ensued is summarized in Table 1.

Eden was to recall in his memoirs that while Molotov " showed a disposition to haggle over the percentages," he [Eden] " was not interested in figures. All I wanted was to be sure that we had more voice in

[23] Elisabeth Barker, *British Policy in South-East Europe in the Second World War* (Macmillan, London, 1976), pp. 267–268.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TABLE 1

The Soviet-British Bargain of 1944

	Churchill-Stalin agreement (*9 Oct.*)	Molotov's initial revision proposed (*10 Oct.*)	Molotov's first "package deal"	Molotov's second "package deal"	Molotov's third "package deal"	Eden's only counter-proposal	Molotov's counter-offer	Molotov's modified counter-offer	Molotov's *11 Oct.* final proposal (apparently accepted)
Soviet influence in Hungary	50%	—	75%	50%+	75%	75%	—	—	80%
Soviet influence in Yugoslavia	50%	—	75%	50%	60%	50%	50%	60%	50%
Soviet influence in Bulgaria	75%	90%	75%	90%	75%	80%	90%	75%	80%
Soviet influence in Romania	90%	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Soviet influence in Greece	10%	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bulgaria and Hungary than we had accepted in Romania." Eden believed that ". . . we obtained what we wanted on almost all points. I should say 90 per cent overall."[24] Aside from the irony of judging the results of this encounter in percentages, Eden was surely mistaken. Compared to the Churchill-Stalin "deal," he gained nothing. And if Molotov's main purpose was to obtain British consent to Soviet primacy in Hungary after the war, then that purpose was achieved. Vojtech Mastny put it well: "The British could hardly congratulate themselves on their accomplishment. For the sake of an ephemeral country [Bulgaria] for which Churchill felt little but disgust, they resigned themselves to the status of bystanders in Hungary, perhaps the most Anglophile nation of all of East Central Europe."[25]

Dealing With Hungarian Communists

The third set of secret meetings held in Moscow in the autumn of 1944 was the gathering of Hungarian communists. The cream of Hungarian communist *émigrés* got together on 13, 20, 28 September and 7 October 1944 to hammer out their programme for and define their role in post-war Hungary. At least 24 leading cadres participated in the debates, some proposing specific measures, some debating seemingly obscure theoretical propositions, some raising rather silly questions. These were the veterans of the Hungarian communist movement in exile, the "Muscovites" who had survived the short-lived Soviet Republic or Commune of 1919, Hungary's prisons during the inter-war years, and Stalin's purges in the 1930s. They were exhilarated by the prospect of returning to their homeland, not as conspirators and agitators facing certain arrest and imprisonment but as free citizens of a new Hungary. Yet, as their speeches and comments showed, they bore the scars of more than two decades of intense factional disputes and personal antagonisms.[26]

The timing of this gathering could not have been more propitious. The first Soviet military units crossed the Romanian-Hungarian border on 23 September, the south-eastern town of Mako was liberated on 26

[24] Eden, op. cit. p. 560.

[25] Mastny, op. cit. pp. 210–211.

[26] The most detailed report on these meetings is in Korom, op. cit. pp. 243–260. See also Balint Szabo, *Nepi demokracia es forradalomelmelet* (People's Democracy and Revolutionary Theory) (Kossuth, Budapest, 1974), pp. 75–105. For a fine summary in English based on Szabo, see Bennett Kovrig, *Communism in Hungary: From Kun to Kadar* (Hoover Institution Press, Stanford, 1979), pp. 154–156. Zoltan Vas, one of the participants, gave me a vivid account of the meetings. Another participant, Gyula Hay, described the atmosphere among the Moscow *émigrés*—residents of the Lux Hotel—as follows:

> One had the impression that the one-time great men of the political emigration hated one another's guts. They clung to the Soviet Union with quaking hearts as constituting henceforth their sole source of contact with life, with humanity. Yet they felt at the same time that the Soviet Union had shamefully betrayed them and robbed them of their former greatness. So they hated their new homeland no less bitterly than they had hated their old.
>
> They had nothing of any consequence to do but they behaved as if they had. They practised assiduously something they referred to as politics, plotted one another's downfall, and generally pranced and capered and whinnied like superannuated parade horses at the knacker's gates.

Julius Hay, *Born 1900: Memoirs* (Library Press, La Salle, Ill., 1975), pp. 218–219.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

September and the Red Army reached the Tisza River on 8 October. Within less than two weeks, Szeged and Debrecen—not counting Budapest, Hungary's largest cities—would be in Soviet hands, and by the end of October the vast military offensive to free Budapest itself would get under way. It was practically certain that all of Hungary would soon be liberated and only by Soviet forces; for by now, Stalin claimed, Hungary was " in the centre of our interests."[27]

Neither of the two main speakers even intimated that the Communist Party might seek to rule post-war Hungary. One of them, the ideologist Jozsef Revai, a particularly articulate spokesman for the Popular Front approach, argued that his party should seek the slow, long-term transformation of Hungarian society. He put considerable emphasis on the necessity of inspiring a national effort in the months and years ahead, stressing that even " a democratic revolution will not happen at once, only a transformation whose point of departure will be national [in scope and character]." He added, however, that since " the bourgeoisie will [not] play the leading role in the national movement," the coming transformation could be and indeed " will have to be developed into a democratic revolution."[28] The primary task was the distribution of land, Revai stressed, and hence the Communist Party must not allow such popular issues as Hungary's proper borders with its neighbours—the much-desired revision of " Trianon Hungary "—to distract the country's attention from the implementation of land reform and from the pursuit of other social and economic reforms.

The second main speaker, and a frequent participant at all the other sessions, was Erno Gero. In his lecture of 7 October, he noted that although Horthy's ultimate fate was uncertain, the old regime was expected to survive. He also argued that the Party had to stand for a democratic transformation and not for the dictatorship of the proletariat because the communist cause in Hungary was now weaker even than in 1918–19, prior to the establishment of the Commune; because anti-Bolshevism was widespread; and because a large part of the industrial working class was corrupted by Horthy's counter-revolutionary propaganda. Looking at more positive developments, Gero observed that some of the " undemocratic but anti-German " elements in Hungary had begun to seek contact with the Left. He concluded by saying that all European Communists—the Hungarians included—should " enter those governments in which [at least] the minimal possibility exists for movement towards a people's democracy."[29]

The term " people's democracy " had a special meaning during the meetings. Only after the war was it to signify a transitional form of

[27] As quoted in Mastny, op. cit. p. 205.

[28] Korom, op. cit. p. 249 and p. 257. For further details on Revai's speech, see Korom's three-volume doctoral dissertation (1974), deposited in the archives of the Hungarian Academy of Science: *Az ideiglenes nemzeti kormany letrejotte es Magyarorszag atallasa az antifasiszta koalicio oldalara* (The Formation of the Provisional National Government and Hungary's Switch to the Side of the Anti-Fascist Coalition), Vol. II, Ch. 6, p. 424 and p. 427. See also Szabo, op. cit. p. 79.

[29] Korom, op. cit. p. 254.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

economic, social and political order in which capitalist and socialist forces, features and characteristics would coexist side by side, in which socialist elements would only gradually gain the upper hand. Now the term meant something more specific and immediate: a " reduction," as Gero put it, in the number of " our enemies, the destruction of feudalism and pro-German capitalism." Thus, the Party's programme for a people's democracy must be so flexible, Gero emphasized, that no important stratum of Hungarian society would find it necessary to oppose it. Put another way, the Communist Party should be prepared to form an alliance with all classes and not only with the industrial proletariat and the peasantry.

During the rather extensive debate that followed Revai's and Gero's presentations, all participants agreed that the new post-war government would have to be broadly based. Most of them seemed to assume that such a government should include those leaders of the Horthy regime who, towards the end of the war, had finally turned against Hitler—notably Count Istvan Bethlen, one-time Prime Minister and the Regent's most influential adviser throughout the inter-war period. Therefore, the discussion focused on the role that the Communist Party would play in such a political order. Sandor Gergely expressed concern about the possibility that, given the expected " continuity," the Communist Party would be outlawed even after the war and thus operate as an illegal entity. Zoltan Lippai wondered which party would have the largest say in the country's political life, listing the Smallholders' Party, the Social Democratic Party, and the anti-Nazi Horthyites as possibilities—not even mentioning the Communist Party.[30]

Such naive and atypical views aside, a number of participants—apparently surprised if not irritated—openly questioned the leadership's conciliatory strategy. Gero, acknowledging the existence of " mistaken views," found it necessary to explain again the reasons for the Party's gradualist approach. Still, some kept returning to the issue of how the Communist Party would make headway: how it would proceed to hasten the process towards a people's democracy. Responding to that question, the leaders referred to a system of local national committees that the Party would establish concurrently with the formation of a central government. Expecting these national committees to be more responsive to communist influence and pressure, Gyorgy Lukacs, the noted Marxist philosopher, argued that a national committee in Budapest could play an especially vital role in the country's political life and indeed " push the government forward."[31]

Given this explanation, some participants assumed that a " duality of power "—as in Russia in 1917—would thus be inevitable. " Whether we want it or not, there will be dual power," said Laszlo Rudas, for example. But this was not the leadership's position. " Dual power: we mustn't

[30] Ibid. p. 255 and p. 250.
[31] Szabo, op. cit. pp. 84–85.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

have," Rakosi retorted in one of his few recorded interjections.[32] Yet the leadership could not define the exact relationship between the local soviets and the central government. " It depends on the circumstances, on where our power will be," said Lukacs. " It's a function of the class struggle," explained Revai. " What's better for us: that the government control them [the local soviets] or they control the government? [It depends on] where the Party will have greater influence! We cannot give an answer in advance."[33]

On the basis of these discussions, Revai and Gero composed the Party's " action programme " during the second half of October. A copy of the draft was given to Dimitrov who forwarded it to Stalin and Molotov for approval. The programme emphasized the need for national collaboration and unity against Nazi Germany, speedy reconstruction and the urgency of land reform. Dimitrov laughingly told Gero that the Hungarian communists were ever so lucky to have the unresolved problem of vast land holdings in Hungary, for this way they could easily champion a popular and quite non-controversial cause.[34] So approved, the Muscovites' programme virtually amounted to temporary self-abnegation. Even the Party's name would soon be changed to " Magyar Kommunista Part " (Hungarian Communist Party) from the previous " Kommunistak Magyarorszagi Partja " (The Communists' Party of Hungary), a slight semantic distinction to emphasize its Hungarian character and de-emphasize its ties to international communism. The Party's best-known leader, Matyas Rakosi, was instructed to stay in Moscow for a while because his return to Hungary might frighten too many of his countrymen. The Party was to display both its red flag and the Hungarian national colours of red, white and green. Although all the participants of the Moscow meetings were not informed about it explicitly, Stalin had told the leadership that in order to distract the attention of the Western Allies from the rapid Sovietization of Poland, the pluralistic phase in Hungary—the democratic interlude—would have to last at least 10 to 15 years.[35]

[32] Ibid. p. 85.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Korom, op. cit. p. 268. Rakosi called Vas " around November 20 " to tell him that the action programme had just been " approved in Moscow " (ibid. p. 295 and p. 314). In a barely modified form, it was then published in the 30 November issue of *Neplap* (Szeged), pp. 1–2. Entitled " Magyarorszag demokratikus ujjaepitesenek es felemelkedesenek programja " (Programme for Hungary's Democratic Reconstruction and Advancement), it is reprinted in Sandor Rakosi and Balint Szabo (eds.), *A Magyar Kommunista Part es a Szocialdemokrata Part hatarozatai, 1944–1948* (Decisions of the Hungarian Communist Party and the Social Democratic Party, 1944–1948) (Kossuth, Budapest, 1967), pp. 37–41.

[35] William O. McCagg, Jr was the first to notice overwhelming *public evidence*, by the end of December 1944, that Stalin's gradualism in Hungary was " designed to compensate Western discontent over Poland." McCagg points out that whenever *Pravda* reported on the new, broadly-based coalition government in Hungary—on 24, 25, 29 and 30 December—in each instance " contingent comments [appeared] praising the activities of pro-Soviet elements in Poland." McCagg, " Communism and Hungary, 1944–1946 " (Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1965), p. 158. It should be noted, too, that Stalin, who paid close attention to Hungarian affairs during the autumn and winter of 1944–45, repeatedly reminded the Hungarian Muscovites not to hurry and especially not to antagonize anyone. On 5 December, for example, he made extensive comments on the Hungarian Communist Party's draft of a new policy declaration, saying (according to Gero's private notes taken that day) that while the draft was

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Muscovites In The Hungarian Countryside

The actual implementation of ideas emanating from these three meetings—i.e. obtaining a measure of continuity with the past, deferring if possible to the sensitivities of Great Britain and the United States, and hence carrying out a programme of national reconstruction by a broadly-based coalition government—was a task initially assigned to Zoltan Vas, the first Muscovite to follow the Red Army to Hungary. Reflecting the Party line, Vas deliberately kept the Communist Party in the background; in point of fact, he was instructed to " implement the Party's objectives through other people . . . even through other parties."[36] Vas went so far as to keep certain people formally out of the Party. For example, Ferenc Erdei of Mako, one of the radical leaders of the populist National Peasant Party, approached Vas with the idea of joining the Communist Party. Vas told him to stay where he was.[37] A few weeks later, Erdei became Minister of Internal Affairs in the Provisional Government as representative of the National Peasant Party—a key position he would hold from late 1944 to the autumn of 1945. In short, Vas and his comrades did what they could to make the Communist Party palatable to, and seem representative of, the Hungarian people—and to appear that way to the Western world whose cooperation Stalin needed and whose potential hostility he so deeply feared.

During the course of these first few weeks, the Muscovites' policies ran into resistance from an unexpected source—from many of the local or " home " communists who found the Party line as defined by the Moscow leaders and indeed by the Russians far too conciliatory towards the old regime. Having suffered under Horthy and having fought him under

---

" generally good," it would benefit from greater emphasis on the " protection of the average person's private property " and on the possibility of " private initiatives " [*po gushche o chastnoy initsiative*]. Additional comments made on the draft included the following: " More flexible formulations." " State with particular clarity that private property will remain untouched." " More flexibility on the land question. Do not address [issue of] numbers." " Underline private property more heavily." " *Speak more flexibly about the clean-up of the* [*old*] *administrative apparatus.*" (Marked by Stalin's initials " I. V." and underlined in Gero's notebook.) Concerning the nature of the coalition government, the Soviet—almost certainly Stalin's—advice was also based on tactical considerations: " Don't be grudging with words, don't scare anyone. But once you gain strength, then move ahead . . . Conclusion of an armistice is the government's [main] task . . . Must utilize as many people as possible, [those] who could be of service to us. [*Mozgatni kell minel tobb embert, akik hasznot hozhatnak.*] Korom, op. cit. pp. 333–334. On another occasion, Stalin told the Hungarian communists that although they could count on Soviet fraternal assistance, " Soviet power cannot do everything for you. You must do the fighting, you must do the work." Ibid. p. 330.

[36] One of 11 secret instructions given to a few Party cadres on 12 November 1944 was the following: " Leaders of the Party shall not thrust themselves into prominence: whenever possible, the Party's objectives must be implemented through others, many times through another party." (Archives of the [Hungarian] Institute of Party History, KI–II/858.) These instructions—entitled " Megjegyzesek " [Comments]—accompanied the formal adoption of the Party's organizational statutes. For the text of the statutes, see Rakosi and Szabo (eds.), op. cit. pp. 34–36.

[37] According to Vas, Erdei subsequently became a secret member of the Hungarian Communist Party. For an extraordinarily candid assessment of Erdei by a contemporary Hungarian historian, see Csaba Gombar, " Az allamferfi Erdei Ferenc: Kerdesek, Szempontok " (Ferenc Erdei the Statesman: Questions, perspectives), in *Tiszataj*, December 1979, pp. 71–75. ". . . on every issue which was the subject of important debate within the National Peasant Party," Gombar writes, " Ferenc Erdei, the leading politician of the Peasant Party, represented the Communist Party's point of view."

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

extraordinarily difficult circumstances, these communists sought revenge and wanted " socialism now." At a Party *aktiv* of 19 November 1944 in Szeged, for example, several home communists heatedly argued for the immediate establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Some even remarked that the " soft " line advocated by the Muscovites must stem from their bourgeois mentality. The answer came from Revai who had just arrived from Moscow: " England and America would not recognize a Communist government. Those who want socialism and the dictatorship of the proletariat make the anti-German policy more difficult."[38] On another occasion, Gero exclaimed: " Some Communists think that the order of the day in Hungary is the establishment of socialism. That is not the position of the Hungarian Communist Party. It is not a correct viewpoint to urge the construction of socialism on the rubble of defeat."[39] On still another occasion, Revai was even more emphatic: " I declare that we do not regard the national collaboration [of the several political parties] as a passing, political coalition, as a tactical chess move, but rather as a long-lasting alliance."[40]

For non-communists, this was as surprising as it seemed appealing. After all, Hungary had been Hitler's last ally. The old regime had had a right-wing, authoritarian and violently anti-communist orientation. The imposition of a Soviet-style " dictatorship of the proletariat "—the return of Bela Kun's 1919 Commune—was the widely anticipated consequence of what Hungary under Horthy had been and what it had done. Accordingly, for such consistent opponents of Horthy's old order as the Social Democrats and the Smallholders, the communists' proposed " Programme for Hungary's Democratic Reconstruction and Advancement " seemed to represent the general objectives that they had dreamed of, and fought for, for a quarter of a century. They could only welcome the Communist Party's advocacy of a competitive political system, freedom of religion, freedom of the press; of free enterprise and private property, combined with land reform and the nationalization of large banks, mines and insurance companies; and of a " democratic " foreign policy rooted in good neighbourly relations, " close friendship " with the Soviet Union and " sincere cooperation " with Great Britain and the US.[41] Political platitudes, to be sure, but they were identical to those the non-communists would have put forth.

For the military officers and political figures in Horthy's entourage, the choice between joining the new government or staying on the sidelines was more difficult. Yet, in the end, most of those who were asked to participate decided to do so—at least for now. Political retirement

[38] Korom, *Magyarorszag* . . . , p. 286. The home communist Marton Horvath returned to the question at the 23 January meeting of the Central Committee. Why did " the elements grouped around Horthy have to be given such a great role—for example, the prime ministry? " he asked. Gero answered: " The international situation dictated it . . ." As quoted in Agnes Sagvari, *Nepfront es koalicio Magyarorszagon 1936–1948* (Popular Front and Coalition in Hungary 1936–1948) (Budapest, Kossuth, 1967), p. 95.

[39] As quoted in Kovrig, op. cit. p. 157.

[40] *Delmagyarorszag* (Szeged), 5 December 1944.

[41] Rakosi and Szabo (eds.), op. cit. pp. 37–42.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

seemed neither useful nor realistic, for the country's place in the emerging European political order was still unclear and its place in the Soviet orbit appeared not to be a foregone conclusion. Despite their reservations and fears about the communists' ultimate plans, then, the majority of the old guard could join the new era, not because they were opportunists who could not live without the perquisites of power but because they sought to position themselves for a future to whose shape they fervently hoped to contribute. Their calculation was that once the war was over and a permanent peace treaty signed, Hungary would regain its sovereignty. Therefore, they sought to gain time at almost any cost—lend their names to the new regime and survive politically—so that they would have sufficient influence to help define the terms of the final peace treaty when negotiations began.

The Provisional Government: Made In Moscow, Ratified In Debrecen

Meanwhile, discussions in Moscow about the distribution of portfolios in a new provisional government moved along two separate tracks. First, as previously noted, the subject had come up between Horthy's delegation, the so-called Hungarian Committee in Moscow led by General Faragho, and the Soviet government, usually led by Molotov. The three sessions known to have been held took place on 13, 16 and 22 November, all during the night so that Stalin could be consulted. Second, there had been extensive consultations between the Soviet government and the " Moscow-based " Hungarian communists, too. Stalin was present on at least one such occasion, on 1 December, when the Hungarian communist side was represented by Rakosi, and by Gero and Imre Nagy—the only non-Jew among the top Muscovites—who had just returned from Szeged for new instructions.[42]

The three sides finally got together for what turned out to be a decisive session on 5 December. Rakosi stayed away. General Kuznetsov introduced Gero and Nagy (these two " gentlemen," as he put it) to the " gentlemen " of the Hungarian Committee.[43] They had not met before—these professional revolutionaries and these well-bred officers and politicians of the old order—but they all knew by now what kind of government they were expected to form. As Molotov had told the Hungarian Committee on 13 November: " The institution to be created should be democratic, with the participation of every party. It may be that the Moscow-based Hungarians could be useful, too, but especially those

[42] In preparation for this and other meetings with either the Soviet government or the Hungarian Committee, the three Muscovites—Rakosi, Gero and Nagy—frequently consulted with Eugene (Jeno) Varga, the Hungarian-born Soviet economist. From 1927 until he fell out of favour with Stalin in 1947, Varga had directed the prestigious Institute for World Economy and World Politics in Moscow. Respected by both Lenin and Stalin, Academician Varga was considered a Soviet economist rather than a Hungarian exile. Nonetheless, he participated in some of the discussions leading to the formation of the first post-war Hungarian government and advised Rakosi, Gero and Vas about the stabilization of the Hungarian currency and other economic matters after the war. Because he was such a significant figure in the Soviet hierarchy, his role in matters relating to Hungary was seldom publicized.

[43] Gosztonyi, " Az Ideiglenes . . . ," loc. cit. pp. 228–229.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

should be regarded as suitable who are respected in Hungary. Jews must be counted out."[44]

Gero presented the list. He said that the Provisional Government should be headed by General Bela Miklos and the remaining four members of the Hungarian Committee should each be given either a cabinet position or—in one case—stay in the Soviet capital as the government's representative. Thus: Defence—General Janos Voros; Culture/Education—Professor Geza Teleki; Ministry of Food—Lieutenant-General Gabor Faragho; and Liaison with Moscow—Domokos Szent-Ivanyi. Gero further recommended that the other seven portfolios should be distributed among four political parties as follows: two " Moscow-based " communists in charge of Agriculture (Imre Nagy) and Commerce (Jozsef Gabor); two Social Democrats in charge of Industry (Ferenc Takacs) and Welfare (Erik Molnar); two Smallholders in charge of Foreign Affairs (Janos Gyongyosi) and Finance (Istvan Vasary); and one representative of the National Peasant Party in charge of Internal Affairs (Ferenc Erdei).[45]

Gero's list was accepted without debate. At a follow-up session with Molotov at 2.30 am that night, there was some talk about the absence of any mention of the Regent and hence about the legitimacy of the Provisional Government, but the Hungarian Committee was clearly pleased with the list. What with the Horthyites and five non-communists assuming all but two of the cabinet seats, there was reason to believe that the Soviet Union was indeed committed to continuity, albeit without Horthy, and to the ideal of forging a genuine coalition government.

In reality, Gero seems to have set at least two political traps for the unwary Hungarian Committee.

First, the Communists were about to take control of not two but four, and perhaps five, ministries in the government. For in addition to Nagy and Gabor, the man to head the important Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ferenc Erdei, was a secret member of the Communist Party, even though he remained formally associated with the National Peasant Party at Zoltan Vas' request. Then there was Erik Molnar, listed by Gero as a Social Democrat. In fact, Molnar had been a home communist, a Party member since 1928, whose assignment in the 1930s was to penetrate the

[44] Ibid. Molotov insisted on the exclusion of Jews from the new government in order to appease Hungarian anti-semites, or to distract attention from the Muscovites of Jewish background, or both (Molotov's own wife was Jewish).

[45] Ibid. Cf. Job Paal and Antal Rado (eds.), *A debreceni feltamadas* (Resurrection in Debrecen) (The Editors' Publication, Debrecen, 1947), p. 148. Relying mainly on Gero's recollections, Korom maintains that the cabinet was not established in Moscow, only " partial agreement " was reached there at the time. According to his account (Korom, op. cit. pp. 337–350), six of the eleven cabinet members were chosen by the Provisional Assembly in Debrecen. The records kept by two participants (Teleki and Szenti-Ivanyi) of the 5 December Moscow meeting as well as the very reliable 1947 Paal-Rado book contradict Korom's argument. It may be that Korom wants to make it appear that the Soviet Union played a smaller role in the creation of the Hungarian government than it did—and was widely believed to have done. Another Hungarian historian also confirmed that " The list of the new cabinet . . . was put together in Moscow, its final version . . . was clarified at home." Istvan Vida, *A Fuggetlen Kisgazdapart politikaja, 1944–1947* (The Politics of the Independent Smallholders' Party, 1944–1947) (Akademiai Kiado, Budapest, 1976), p. 31.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Social Democratic Party and influence its policies from within. Lastly, there was the dubious case of Janos Gyongyosi, the designated Foreign Minister and nominally a Smallholder, who was already working for, and on behalf of, the Soviet High Command in Western Hungary.[46]

Second, Gero offered a cabinet seat to all members of the Horthyite Hungarian Committee probably because their past could some day be used against them. After all, Bela Miklos, the new Prime Minister, could be justly accused of collaboration with the Third Reich: he had served as the senior General of the Army until mid-October 1944 and in that capacity he had directed Hungary's war effort against the Soviet Union. The same could be said about the other officers, Voros and Faragho. As for the civilians, even Professor Teleki and Szent-Ivanyi had been identified with some of the policies of the Horthy regime. In short, Gero's coalition appeared to be far more genuine and inclusive than it actually was.

Pleased with the agreement and anxious to have it ratified, the Soviet government was to fly members of the new Hungarian Provisional Government, together with a few Soviet officials, to Debrecen the next day. But the weather was bad and so the group left by train on 7 December. When they arrived five days later, they found Debrecen—a county seat in eastern Hungary—already bustling with political activity. The so-called Preparatory Committee for a Provisional Assembly was wrestling with the legalities and politics of creating a new legislature, one that would have proper authority to elect the members of the Provisional Government. From the liberated areas, delegates to the Provisional Assembly began to arrive, some having been elected at town meetings, others selected by the newly created, local national committees. In the end, 45 cities and towns sent 230 delegates, of whom 89 (38·7 per cent) turned out to be communists; 57 (25 per cent) Smallholders; 43 (18·7 per cent) Social Democrats; 16 (7 per cent) from the National Peasant Party; 13 (5·6 per cent) representing the Citizen's Democratic Party; and 12 (5 per cent) were identified as unaffiliated.[47] The communist leadership was not pleased with the results. As Gero put it in a letter sent to Rakosi in Moscow: " As far as the proportion of communist representatives is concerned, we have certainly gone too far. It happened partly because we were in a hurry, partly because the local comrades were overzealous."[48]

But everything else was under control. The delegates argued about who should serve as deputy head of one ministry or another, and the election of the Chairman of the Provisional Assembly caused something

[46] Vas claims that both Erdei and Gyongyosi applied to him for membership of the Communist Party and that they became secret members. Other sources could not confirm Gyongyosi's membership.

[47] Because of rather chaotic conditions, the actual Party affiliation of some of the delegates could not easily be determined at that time. Thus, the first official count referred to only 71 communists (rather than 89), together with 55 Smallholders, 38 Social Democrats, 16 National Peasants, 12 members of the Citizen's Democratic Party, 19 trade unionists and 19 unaffiliated delegates. Most of those originally listed as " trade unionists " turned out to be communists—hence the discrepancy. For the official list, see *Ideiglenes Nemzetgyulesi Naplo* (Diary of the Provisional Assembly) (Budapest, 1946), p. 160.

[48] Dated 28 December 1944, Gero's letter to Rakosi is deposited in the Archives of the [Hungarian] Institute of Party History (274–7/13).

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of an uproar. However, there was no argument about the two key issues of the day: the distribution of cabinet portfolios as decided in Moscow on 5 December—the list to which a Social Democrat, Agoston Valentiny, was added as Minister of Justice—and the new government's professed objectives. Thus, at the year's end, as Budapest was still to be liberated, the country's post-war political order was already in place. The radical transformation of Hungary's social and economic life was under way. The Soviet-ordained gradualist approach of the Communist Party was not only an eminently workable strategy in Hungary, but it proved to be an effective Soviet signal to the West as well. *The Economist* of London assured its readers on 30 December that the composition of the new Hungarian government had proved the accuracy of " Mr Molotov's promise " that Russia would not attempt to influence the " domestic structure " of countries under its temporary supervision.

Reading this, even Molotov must have allowed himself a rare smile.

Changing The Party Line In 1947

Less than three years later, when the founding meeting of the Cominform got under way on 21 September 1947, the Soviet leaders were no longer in a smiling mood. Stalin's differentiated plan for post-war Europe—both the Popular Front strategy of domestic cooperation through coalitions in Western and in East-Central Europe and the Popular Front strategy of international cooperation with the West—ceased to produce new gains for the Soviet Union. Gone was the spirit of 1943 or 1944 when an influential American magazine like *Life* could seriously assert that the Russians " look like Americans, dress like Americans, and think like Americans." Gone were the days when *Reader's Digest*, of all magazines, would publish the condensed version of Joseph E. Davies' extraordinarily naive, pro-Soviet memoirs. Who could even remember the time, three short years earlier, when respectable people in the West used to explain away Stalin's " stubbornness " by claiming that he was but the victim of faceless bureaucrats in the Politburo? Indeed, the once-prevalent American image of a benign and trustworthy Uncle Joe has been replaced by a widely perceived reality called the Soviet totalitarian menace.

With the Grand Alliance thus shattered—and given the removal of communists from the governments of Western Europe and the apparent standstill in East-Central Europe—it was time for Stalin to initiate drastic changes in policy. He made the founding meeting of the Cominform the turning point in his approach towards the West and towards the international communist movement, and that was when Stalin began to lay the groundwork for a move against Yugoslavia.

What propelled Stalin to replace the Popular Front or " Right " strategy with the more rigid " Left " strategy was the spectre of " incipient diversity " in international communism, his fear of increasing

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

autonomism.[49] The change did not take place from one day to the next; Stalin had been concerned about the apparent erosion of communist revolutionary *élan* for some time. It may be that the celebrated April 1945 article by Jacques Duclos was the first sign that Stalin was having second thoughts about the Popular Front approach—a Moscow-inspired article in which Duclos criticized the American Communist Party for " revisionism " and attacked its leader, Earl Browder, for anti-Party behaviour.[50] Or it is possible that at that time Stalin sought to signal his displeasure only at the *excessive zeal* with which communists had carried out his policies. He signalled a dramatic turn in international communism from Right to Left, from gradualism to insurrectionism, only in the autumn of 1947. For, by then, his early doubts had crystallized. In Western Europe, the communist parties had allowed themselves to be removed from their countries' governments. In East-Central Europe, the gradualism he had devised for this area was thwarted by the Yugoslavs who, contrary to his vision, had seized power too soon; it was frustrated by the Finns and the Austrians whose quest for power had failed altogether; and it was even foiled by the Czechoslovaks and the Hungarians who had not moved soon enough to consolidate their power. While Stalin had reason to be satisfied with what was happening in Eastern Europe, even here he could find the Gomulka-wing in Poland too pertinacious, too intractable, somewhat independent.

Stalin needed the Yugoslav communists' help to present the abrupt change in policy without giving the impression that he had been wrong or inconsistent. Then, as always, the Soviet Party insisted on being consistently correct, and Stalin of course was infallible. If so, how could the two Soviet representatives at the Cominform meeting, Andrei Zhdanov and Georgi Malenkov, put forth Stalin's militant line without criticizing Stalin's previous gradualist line? And how could they prevent the Yugoslavs, who had advocated such a militant line all along, from asking the embarrassing question as to why Stalin had to wait so long to shelve his " capitulationist " Popular Front ideas? Would not Tito's representatives, Eduard Kardelj and Milovan Djilas, claim to have been " consistently correct "?

[49] The term is borrowed from Joseph R. Starobin. See his essay (" Origins of the Cold War," in *Foreign Affairs* Vol. XLVII, No. 4 [July 1969], pp. 681–696) in which he offers the following conclusion:

> The origins of the cold war lie deeper, however, than any analysis of Russia's own interest. Nor can they be understood only in terms of an attempt to prevent economic recovery and political stability in Western Europe. The cold war's origins must be found in a dimension larger than the requirements of Soviet internal mobilization or the thrust of its foreign policy; they lie in the attempt to overcome the incipient diversity within a system of [communist] states and parties, among whom the changes produced by the war had outmoded earlier ideological and political premises. The conditions for the transformation of a monolithic movement had matured and ripened. The sources of the cold war lie in communism's unsuccessful attempt to adjust to this reality, followed by its own abortion of this attempt. For Stalin the cold war was a vast tug-of-war with the West, whereby not only internal objectives could be realized but the international movement subordinated; its constituent parts went along—bewildered but believing—on the assumption that, in doing so, they would survive and prosper. . . . Thus, the cold war arose from the failure of a movement to master its inner difficulties and choose its alternatives.

[50] The Duclos article was originally published in *Cahiers du communisme*, No. 6 (1945), pp. 21–38. The English translation appeared in the New York *Daily Worker* on 24 May 1945 under the title, " On the Dissolution of the Communist Party of the United States."

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

To protect Stalin's authority, Zhdanov employed the simple device of shifting blame for the gradualist sins of the recent past by pretending that it was the communists of Western and East-Central Europe who had failed to implement Stalin's policies correctly and hence it was they, not Stalin, who were at fault.

The more complex device Zhdanov employed aimed at the entrapment of the Yugoslav communists. The two Yugoslav delegates had been asked to come to the Cominform meeting a day or two before the opening session in order to consult with the Soviet representatives. Hoping to use the occasion to discuss a couple of misunderstandings between the two parties, Kardelj and Djilas were happy to oblige. And what they learned and what they were asked to do were both surprising and satisfying: at long last, Stalin was ready to turn against the gradualist Right in international communism and he asked for the Yugoslavs' support. Would the Yugoslav comrades criticize the " insufficiently militant " communist parties of Western and East-Central Europe for relying on parliamentary methods to gain power, for trusting Social Democrats, for failing to see through imperialist designs?

Kardelj and Djilas failed to understand in time that Stalin's cordiality towards the Yugoslav Party would be short-lived, and that there was a price to be paid for the harsh attacks they were urged to deliver. For in a deceitful political scheme strikingly similar to the factional struggles in the 1920s,[51] Stalin presently instigated the Yugoslav Left to censure the gradualist Right, all the while contemplating the next round when he would use the Right, by then properly humbled, to bring the self-righteous and stubborn Yugoslavs under control.[52] When, several months later, Kardelj and Djilas finally realized that—in preparation for the 1948 confrontation—Stalin had turned them loose to " create a gulf " between the Yugoslav Party and the others, and that Stalin was thus planting the seeds of bitter hostility towards the Yugoslavs among communists everywhere,[53] it was too late. Most participants left the founding meeting of the Cominform with a sense of brooding resentment against the humiliation inflicted on them by Kardelj and Djilas, and when the time came to retaliate—in 1948—they would be as vehement and zealous in their denunciation of the Yugoslavs as Kardelj and Djilas had earlier been of them.

[51] At that time, Stalin had first allied himself with Bukharin and others on the Right to oust Trotsky, Zinoviev and others on the Left, but shortly thereafter he had the remnants of the Left help him remove his erstwhile ally and their former antagonist, Bukharin.

[52] I am indebted to Robert C. Tucker for suggesting this as a possible interpretation of Stalin's motives. Subsequently, I asked Milovan Djilas in an interview held in Belgrade in the summer of 1980 if he thought, in retrospect, that he and Kardelj had been trapped by Stalin. Djilas told me that he and his colleagues in the Yugoslav Politburo had discussed this possibility at several meetings in 1948. In the absence of firm evidence one way or another, they could only speculate, but of all the Yugoslav leaders it was especially Tito who believed that Stalin was devious enough to set them up in order to isolate them in the movement. " And Tito knew Stalin well," Djilas added.

[53] Vladimir Dedijer, *Tito* (Simon and Schuster, New York, 1953), p. 295, where Dedijer also notes: " It was no accident that Yugoslavia was given top place at the first [Cominform] meeting. The intention was to bind her as tightly as possible to this organization in order to facilitate the blow that was to follow."

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The End In Szklarska Poreba

From official accounts published afterwards, the outside world could learn some of what happened at the founding meeting of the Cominform, but not much.

Zhdanov's " two-camp " speech received the most attention, and his message was clear: the era of " cooperation " between the Soviet Union and the West had come to an end. " The more the war recedes into the past," he declared, " the more distinct becomes . . . the division of political forces operating in the international arena into two major camps: the imperialist and anti-democratic camp on the one hand and the anti-imperialist and democratic camp on the other." Although Soviet foreign policy was still to be based on long-term coexistence between socialism and capitalism, Zhdanov no longer expected the West to reciprocate. He identified the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan as extreme expressions of American imperialism, steps which reflect aggressive military and strategic intent as well as a commitment to economic expansion and ideological warfare. Supported by Great Britain and France, American imperialism was said to aim at the enslavement of Europe—making it a " 49th state "—and at unleashing a new war against the Soviet Union. According to Zhdanov, the United States was also aided by right-wing Social Democrats—such as British Prime Minister Clement R. Atlee and Foreign Secretary Ernest Bevin, French Premier Paul Ramadier, the German opposition leader Kurt Schumacher, Austrian President Karl Renner and Vice-Premier Adolf Schaerf, and Italian Socialist leader Guiseppe Saragat—all of whom he now classified as turncoats and traitors " pushing their countries on the road to vassal-like dependence on the USA." Still, Zhdanov concluded, the forces of progress led by the Soviet Union would prevail because they were united against imperialist expansion, and because they knew that any concession similar to Western appeasement of Hitler's Germany in Munich would only prompt the imperialists to engage in " even more shameless and aggressive " actions.[54]

In the West, it was not particularly difficult to decipher the cold war message of Szklarska Poreba, all the more so because the militant language of the conference was promptly translated into widespread demonstrations and strikes throughout Western Europe. By the end of

[54] The official report on the conference is *Informatsionnoe soveshchanie predstavitelei nekotorykh v Polshe v kontse sentyabrya 1947 goda* (Ogiz, Moscow, 1948); Zhdanov's speech appears on pp. 13–48. The most complete unofficial account is by one of the Italian delegates, Eugenio Reale, who left the Italian Communist Party after the Soviet intervention in Hungary in 1956; see his *Avec Jacques Duclos au banc des accuses* (Plon, Paris, 1958). See also Lilly Marcou, *Le Kominform* (Presses de la Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, Paris, 1977); Adam B. Ulam, *Titoism and the Cominform* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1952); and William O. McCagg, Jr., " Domestic Politics and Soviet Foreign Policy at the Cominform Conference in 1947," in *Slavic and Soviet Series* (Tel-Aviv), Vol. 2, No. 1, (Spring 1977), pp. 1–30. Reale subsequently added to his initial account in " The Founding of the Cominform," in Milorad M. Drachkovitch and Branko Lazitch (eds.), *The Comintern: Historical Highlights* (Praeger, New York, 1966), pp. 253–268. Another important delegate, Milovan Djilas, was kind enough to make available to me his recollections of the 1947 meeting; his memorandum is dated 1 October 1973.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

October, Italy's violent strikes claimed 22 lives, 154 others were wounded, and 118 anti-communist clubs were damaged or destroyed. In France, the first large-scale strike since the Second World War, organized by the communists, took place in November; Duclos declared that France was rapidly becoming a satellite of the " Anglo-Saxons " and called for a new offensive against American expansionism.[55] Such militant actions and bellicose statements, combined with what was then known of the conference proceedings, confirmed the initial Western impression of increased Soviet hostility against the West, particularly the US. It was also believed that, given the Soviet view of the existence of two unalterably opposed camps and the centrality of Europe in Soviet thinking, Moscow's political and possibly even military offensive would be waged on the central front, in Europe.

Yet the official record of the conference concealed as much as it revealed. As the unofficial accounts of the conference would subsequently reveal, the delegates may have attended one of the most acrimonious gatherings in the stormy history of the communist movement. The French and the Italians especially were subjected to bitter accusations, while criticism of the Czechoslovak and the Hungarian communist parties, and of the Gomulka-wing in Poland, was more muted and rather circuitous. Heckling of some of the speakers was the order of the day. Duclos was rudely and repeatedly interrupted by the Yugoslavs, the Russians and the Romanians. Ana Pauker accused him and the Italian Longo of " parliamentary pirouetting." Zhdanov also turned on Duclos: " Do you not believe, Comrade Duclos, that the people would have understood the situation better if you had said that the Communist Party was an opposition party? This expression has not occurred in either Thorez's or your speeches since May. If the Communist Party observes that it has taken the wrong road, it must openly confess its mistake; this you have not done! " Malenkov joined the rumpus: " We would like Duclos to state his conclusions clearly, to tell us just what errors were committed by the leadership of the French Communist Party."[56] Djilas denounced both West European communist parties for " political and ideological liberalism," adding that the French communists had underestimated the Gaullist danger posed by the man who was known to be Churchill's " agent."[57] Zhdanov interrupted Luigi Longo: " You, Italian comrades, are bigger parliamentarians than de Gasperi himself. You are the biggest political party, and yet they throw you out of the government."[58]

Humiliated and angry, Duclos at one point left the meeting, sat by himself on a bench in the park, and would not talk to anyone. Back at the conference hall, his voice still trembling, he admitted his Party's

[55] As quoted in *World Communist Movement: Selective Chronology 1918–1957* (GPO, Washington, DC, 1963), p. 309.

[56] Both quotations in Reale, " The Founding of the Cominform," loc. cit. p. 266.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Dedijer, op. cit. p. 296.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

" opportunism " and apologized to his inquisitors. So did Longo for the Italian Party. In fact, Longo went so far as to ask Kardelj and Djilas, by far his most vocal critics, to explain their position privately and in greater detail. When they did, with Kardelj stressing the old Yugoslav view that a " fetish of coalitionism " had been infecting the communist movement, Longo responded by reassuring the Yugoslavs that the Italian Communist Party had not embraced reformism, social democracy or liberalism and that therefore it had not deprived itself of proper revolutionary fervour. In any case, Longo added, the Italian Communist Party had only followed Moscow's instructions.

With the obligatory and rather pitiful self-criticism behind them, Duclos and Longo left for home to implement the new Party line. Puzzled, confused and probably angry, they must have wondered why they had to accept rebuke for policies which had been initiated, approved and promoted by Stalin himself.

The Turn Of The Hungarians

Although the collusive Soviet-Yugoslav condemnation of the French and the Italian parties, and Zhdanov's " two-camp " speech were the two featured events in Szklarska Poreba, the side-show was not without interest either. Three other parties—the Polish, the Czechoslovak and the Hungarian—had some difficulty explaining why they had continued to uphold the concept of peaceful transition to socialism for so long, why they still tolerated the existence of other political parties at this late date, why they failed to press for a radical economic programme on the Soviet pattern.

Speaking for the Polish Party—even as he represented only one of its factions—Gomulka turned out to be the only delegate at the conference to express reservations about the proposed militant approach, about the very formation of the Cominform, about adopting a strategy common to all communist parties. In open session, moreover, he stubbornly repeated the view that political circumstances in Poland still called for communist cooperation with, rather than the absorption of, the Polish socialists' quite accommodating left wing. Neither the official record nor the unofficial accounts indicate clearly how the other delegates responded to these by now outdated ideas, but Gomulka is known to have left the gathering sceptical about the new line in international communism. In Warsaw, he continued to argue " that the PPR [the Polish Communist Party] would be wrong to vote for collectivization," and when his Politburo colleagues apparently failed to go along, Gomulka sought to circumvent their authority by claiming that " the Politburo should refer such an issue to the Party's Central Committee."[59] An unreconstructed

[59] *Nowe Drogi*, September–October 1948, pp. 40 ff. Gomulka's whole career is elegantly traced in Nicholas Bethell, *Gomulka: His Poland, His Communism* (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1969).

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

believer in the " Polish road " to socialism, Gomulka lost and was soon dismissed as his Party's Secretary-General and placed under house arrest.

Unlike the openly divided Polish Party, the Czechoslovak Communist Party was apparently united behind the Cominform resolutions. Yet, because of the Party's gradualist past, some of its leaders were very much on the defensive. Party chairman Klement Gottwald was particularly fearful that his own close identification with the coalition-seeking, parliamentary approach would eventually diminish his political authority. In their desire to end the era of " parliamentary pirouetting " and " in their anxiety about the fate of the revolution,"[60] Gottwald and his supporters went so far as to consider the immediate introduction of the hegemonic Yugoslav political order. Without Moscow having told them as yet exactly what to do, but having seen Soviet-Yugoslav collusion in Szklarska Poreba, they figured they should now emulate the Yugoslav system. At the time, Tito's prestige was at its height and Stalin did not yet make his move to tame the Yugoslavs. An American counter-intelligence agent was told by " informants from the Czechoslovak security police (STB) and army intelligence (OZB) " *for the first time in September 1947*—at the time of the constituent Cominform meeting—that a " takeover was bound to come, probably in early spring."[61]

The new line created an " extremely distrustful attitude "[62] within the Czechoslovak Party. Circumstantial evidence strongly suggests the possibility that a few Party leaders—such as Julius Duris, Antonin Zapotocky, communists in the security apparatus, and perhaps even General Secretary Slansky—might have felt vindicated now by the more militant approach that they were suspected to have favoured for some time.[63] True or not, Gottwald began to act in a highly defensive way, compensating for his gradualist orientation and trying hard to prove his loyalty to Stalin anew. That is why he sought to do what he presumed Stalin expected of him—to emulate the Yugoslav system. But then, in mid-1948, he made still another turn after the Stalin-Tito break to reflect the *latest* Soviet-ordained Party line. It seems that as early as 1948[64] Gottwald began to make preparations for an extensive and violent purge in his Party, a purge whose main victim would be the " Titoist " Slansky himself. Having so manoeuvred to preempt the militant orientation by employing a scheme worthy of Stalin's schemes, Gottwald succeeded in making himself his Party's unchallenged leader in the dark years of Stalinist intransigence to come.

[60] Karel Kaplan as quoted in Tigrid, loc. cit. p. 408.

[61] Claire Sterling, *The Masaryk Case: The Murder of Democracy in Czechoslovakia* (David R. Godine, Boston, 1982), p. 162.

[62] Tigrid, loc. cit. p. 408.

[63] For a fascinating account of factional infighting in the Czechoslovak Communist Party on the eve of the February 1948 *coup*, see an unpublished, mimeographed study dated March 1979 by Karel Kaplan, " The Rise of a Monopoly of Power in the Hands of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, 1948–1949." Kaplan had complete access to Czechoslovak Party archives during the " Prague Spring " of 1968. I am indebted to Jiri Valenta for making this study available to me.

[64] Sterling, op. cit. p. 219.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE Hungarian Communist Party's predicament at, and after, Szklarska Poreba was similar to that of the Czechoslovak communists. Its delegates left Budapest for the conference at short notice, not knowing what to expect. If anything, they had reason to believe that the Hungarian communists' record of the previous three years would earn them accolades from their foreign comrades. After all, the Hungarian Party had applied consummate skill to the implementation of the Popular Front strategy. Operating in a hostile—anti-Soviet and anti-communist—environment comparable only to Poland's and possibly Romania's, the Hungarian communists had still managed to obtain 17 per cent of the popular vote in the free elections of 1945. In their dealings with the non-communist parties, the communist leaders—particularly Secretary-General Rakosi and ideologist Revai—possessed an uncanny knack of knowing when to be accommodating and when to be unyielding, when to rely on parliamentary methods and when to resort to intimidation and even terror, when to make concessions and when to threaten to make public an embarrassing story about a stubborn opponent's past.

After the Muscovite leadership convinced the home communists of the need to shelve their militancy for the time being—a process that was completed by the spring of 1945—there were no differences over strategy or even tactics within the Hungarian Communist Party, certainly none that were significant. True, it was widely rumoured that the leading home communist on the Left, Laszlo Rajk, would have preferred to move along on the road to power more rapidly, and that the veteran literary critic and philosopher on the Right, Gyorgy Lukacs, would have preferred a cultural orientation more closely attuned to Hungary's European tradition. But at least until the winter of 1947–48, and hence during the course of Hungary's democratic interlude, the leadership was both united and disciplined, and its commitment to the Popular Front strategy of gaining power over an extended period of time was all but absolute.

So ambiguous was their predicament, so difficult was the balancing act they were expected to perform, and so complex was the task of shaping a political order they concurrently sought to support and subvert that there were times during the democratic interlude when all the communists could do was to emulate their coalitionary partners/opponents—and play for time! As Vas sums up his and his comrades' sense of uncertainty (in the as yet unpublished part of his extraordinarily candid memoirs), they were unsure *even in 1946* whether " Stalin might not let Hungary come under the political influence of the [Western] allies in exchange for Soviet demands on Poland and Germany."[65]

To be sure, the communists had resorted to some harsh measures before the founding meeting of the Cominform in Szklarska Poreba. Early in 1947, they implicated Bela Kovacs, the Smallholders' popular Secretary-General, in a so-called " anti-democratic conspiracy," and the major political crisis they created that summer brought down the

[65] Mr Vas, who died in 1983 at the age of 80, was kind enough to allow me to read the uncensored version of his memoirs.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Smallholder-led government of Ferenc Nagy. On the eve of the Cominform gathering, on 16 September 1947, the Party's Politburo began to prepare guidelines for the " fusion " of the Communist and Social Democratic parties.[66] Still, much of what transpired at Szklarska Poreba took the Hungarian Party by surprise. In his first speech at the conference itself, Revai still argued that the Hungarian political system was a " mixture made up of elements of the people's democracy and bourgeois democracy " and that it was uncertain as yet which of the two elements would prevail.[67] In a retrospective article written two years later, Revai offered this analysis of the Hungarian Party's predicament during the democratic interlude:

> At most we were feeling our way in the right direction. The Party didn't possess a unified, clarified, elaborated attitude in respect to the character of the People's Democracy and its future development. We must point this out, exercising self-criticism. And we must emphasize the fact that we received the decisive stimulation and assistance for the clarification of our future development from the Communist (Bolshevik) Party of the Soviet Union, from the teaching of comrade Stalin. The two sessions of the Cominform, the first in the fall of 1947, the second in the summer of 1948, were of fundamental help for us. The first taught us that the People's Democracy couldn't halt at any but the final stage of its destruction of the capitalistic elements . . .[68]

Indeed, it was only after Zhdanov classified Hungary as one of the people's democracies at Szklarska Poreba that the Hungarian delegation began to understand that the new militant line, the end of the Popular Front era, required a fundamental change in the Party's policies at home. By the time he made his second speech, Revai sought to make it appear as if the Hungarian communists had had " everything under control." Instead of pointing out that in the recently concluded August elections the non-communist parties had gained 78 per cent of the vote, he boasted of the successful infiltration of the tiny and insignificant National Peasant Party (which could muster only 8 per cent of the vote in 1947 and 7 per cent in 1945): " It acts under our guidance," Revai declared. " The secretary is a Communist; one of the two ministers representing it in the government is a Communist. Fifteen of its 32 deputies are Communists, eight are sympathizers."[69] With respect to Zoltan Pfeiffer's openly anti-communist Hungarian Independence Party, which had not been prevented from participating in the elections, Revai could only promise future action: " The destruction of Pfeiffer's party is indispens-

[66] Erzsebet Strassenreiter, " Adalekok a magyarorszagi munkasegyseg tortenetehez es az egyseges munkaspart letrejottehez " (On the History of Workers' Unity and of the Creation of the United Workers' Party), in Karoly Suri (ed.), *A munkasegysegyseg fejlodese Somogy megyeben 1944–1948* (The Development of Workers' Unity in Somogy County 1944–1948) (Kaposvar, 1979), p. 61.

[67] J. Revai, " O deyatelnosti TsK Vengerskoi kommunistickeskoi partii," in *Informatsionnoe soveshchanie* . . . , loc. cit. pp. 256–279.

[68] Jozsef Revai, " The Character of a ' People's Democracy,' " in *Foreign Affairs*, October 1949, pp. 143–152.

[69] Reale, " The Founding of the Cominform," loc. cit. p. 255.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

able," he tried to assure his comrades at the conference. " We shall use the police to carry it out."[70]

When he returned to Budapest, Revai concluded in a secret memorandum to the Politburo that the Cominform had made " significant changes in the political and tactical direction of the Comintern's 7th Congress."[71] Although he sought to minimize the direct implications of this " significant change " for the Hungarian Party in order to justify the gradualist sins of the recent past, his memorandum was full of self-critical remarks: the Party was said to lack a firm ideological basis for its programmes and policies, it overestimated the function of " parliamentary combinations," it was given to " practicism." In order to fulfil its new mission, Revai urged the Party to adopt six new steps: revision of the Party's coalition strategy; re-examination of economic policy with a view towards supplanting the role of the bourgeoisie; changes in state administration and in the army's organizational structure; measures to raise the Party's " militant spirit "; improvements in the work of the trade unions to avoid " bureaucratic degeneration "; and a thorough reorientation of ideological work to provide a theoretical basis for the implementation of all the other tasks and to explain anew the evolution of the country's political system since 1944.[72]

At one of many debates in the Politburo later that year—on 10 December 1947—Imre Nagy, apparently alone, argued against the new militancy. Couched in obtuse Marxist language, his main point was that external developments by themselves were not sufficient to prompt the adoption of radical internal measures; that the thorough nationalization of Hungary's economy was not warranted by prevailing socio-economic conditions. He maintained that although the " industrial working class " (i.e. the Hungarian Communist Party) had obtained a leading role in the country's political life, the economy remained predominantly capitalist and that fact was the decisive characteristic of Hungary's economic and hence political order (rather than international circumstances). In short, Nagy continued to hold on to the pre-Cominform view that the Hungarian transitional system was a " mixture " of the old and the new, a view which had been the Hungarian Party line all along and which had been put forth by Revai as late as the beginning of the Szklarska Poreba gathering. But Nagy's position was by now untimely and therefore inoperative.

The post-Cominform majority view was summed up by Gero, who served as chairman of one of the two commissions which the Politburo appointed to study the lessons of the Cominform meeting:

> As a result of domestic and international developments and contrary to our previous conceptions, a new and serious forward step is

[70] Ibid.

[71] As quoted in Szabo, op. cit. p. 222. For another summary of Revai's report, see Agnes Sagvari, *Nepfront es koalicio Magyarorszagon 1936–1948* (Popular Front and Coalition in Hungary 1936–1948) (Budapest, 1967), pp. 272 ff.

[72] Szabo, op. cit. p. 220.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> possible in the nationalization of industry and, in part, of commerce. As is known, our original plan was to affect nationalization gradually. . . . In my view, it would be a mistake to adhere to the original schedule and not to take advantage of the favourable circumstances.[73]

In another speech, Gero stated that Hungary " had crossed the Rubicon between bourgeois democracy and people's democracy." Janos Kadar, then one of the Party's secretaries, echoed that opinion when he asserted that the country had " caught up " with its neighbours in Eastern Europe. Rakosi, in sharp contrast to the earlier view according to which the stage of " people's democracy " did not yet denote the construction of " socialism," presently redefined the term suggesting that the building of a people's democracy was identical with the building of socialism, after all.

These statements and ideological revisions were accompanied by harsh measures in the political realm. First, the results of the August 1947 elections were *de facto* revoked by the Party's decision to encourage non-communist politicians to leave the country—or cooperate with the new bogus coalition. Dozens if not hundreds of prominent political figures were thus forced to leave for the West in October-November; others signed up to serve the communist regime. Second, as the centrist leaders of the Social Democratic Party were among those who escaped, the communists called for the " unification " of the two so-called working-class parties (which took place in 1948).

The third political development in the aftermath of the founding meeting of the Cominform had to do with the intensification of infighting within the Communist Party leadership itself. It seems that Rakosi perceived a potential challenge to his authority less from the gradualist Imre Nagy, who was not given to political infighting and who was reportedly protected by Georgi Malenkov, than from Laszlo Rajk, another Politburo member and then Minister of Internal Affairs. For not unlike Duris and Zapotocky in Czechoslovakia, Rajk had been suspected by Rakosi to have favoured a more militant approach since 1945; according to one account, Rajk and a few other home communists had " considered the coalition ' corrupt,' and they craved a cleaner break with the past than Rakosi was offering."[74] Although there is no evidence that he actually did so, Rajk *could* claim to have held the " correct " militant position before Szklarska Poreba and hence he was a potential threat to Rakosi, while Rakosi had pursued the coalition games and hence he felt vulnerable. A consummate master of political intrigues, Rakosi accordingly allowed, perhaps encouraged, Gabor Peter, the head of the political police (AVH) and thus Rajk's subordinate, to accuse Rajk in December 1947 of " anti-party and anti-regime behaviour "; at the same time

[73] Gero's report to the Politburo is quoted in Ivan T. Berend, *Ujjaepites es a nagytoke elleni harc Magyarorszagon 1945–1948* (Reconstruction and the Struggle Against Big Capital in Hungary 1945–1948) (Budapest, 1962), p. 373.

[74] McCagg, op. cit. p. 268.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Politburo member Farkas joined in with the equally incredible claim that, because of Rajk, " [the Ministry of] Internal Affairs was not in the Party's hand."[75] Next month Farkas went so far as to call Rajk an " enemy."[76] In the autumn of 1948 Rajk was transferred to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and then in May 1949 he was arrested as a Titoist, tortured, sentence and killed. His only crime was that his more militant sentiments had been perceived or presumed before either Stalin or Rakosi would come to regard them as timely—and he paid for them with his life.

In a sense, it spoke well for Rakosi's political acumen that he could as effectively implement the Stalinist policy of gradualism as he would the Stalinist policy of militancy and confrontationism. In the winter of 1947–48 he reduced the Hungarian coalition into a totally bogus coalition, a communist political order in which a few nominally non-communist figureheads served in order to cover up the dramatic change—the watershed—that took place in the Party's policies after the Cominform meeting. With that change, in fact, Stalin drew the curtain—the iron curtain—on the democratic interlude he had composed for Hungary three short years earlier in Moscow. The communists' solemn declaration—" we do not regard the national collaboration [of the several political parties] as a passing, political coalition, as a tactical chess move, but rather as a long-lasting alliance "—turned out to be a lie.

[75] As quoted in Erzsebet Strassenreiter and Peter Sipos, *Rajk Laszlo* (Laszlo Rajk) (Budapest, 1974), p. 185.
[76] Ibid.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Memory of the Dead

An interview with Gyorgy Krasso on the trial of Imre Nagy and the Hungarian revolution. The text of this interview was published in the Hungarian samizdat *periodical* A Hirmondo *(The Messenger), no. 2, December 1983.*

Introduction

In one of the more remote corners of Rakoskeresztur Ujkoztenexto (new public cemetery in Budapest), near the rubbish heap, can be found the patch of ground in which are buried those who were executed after the Hungarian revolution of 1956. The graves are sunken and unmarked, and it is possible that some of the hastily filled-in graves contain more than one corpse; nobody knows who is buried in which grave. All applications for information made by the bereaved relatives have been rejected with curt and insensitive replies.

There is a group of four graves which are different from the rest. These are orderly mounds which are always adorned with flowers. Relatives believe Imre Nagy—the former Hungarian Prime Minister—and the other co-defendants executed with him are buried here.

On 13 June 1983, after the last lecture before the summer break of the Monday Free University (under whose auspices lectures are held in private apartments), the audience in the Gyula Lengyel Street apartment stayed on to listen to two commemorative lectures. In the first, Gabor Demszky spoke about the East Berlin workers' revolt in 1953. Then Gyorgy Krasso opened a commemoration of Imre Nagy, Pal Maleter and Miklos Gimes (executed a quarter of a century ago, on 16 June 1958), and of Geza Losonczy and Jozsef Szilagyi (who were murdered even earlier).

Krasso, on the basis of his personal recollections, described the circumstances of the executions and the conditions in which the defendants in the Imre Nagy trial were kept in their last years and days, and he then spoke of their lives.

The actor Tamas Fodor read out a contemporary account of Geza Losonczy's intervention in the Petofi circle on 27 June 1956, the leader article, " Hungarian Freedom " by Miklos Gimes in the newspaper *Magyar Szabadsag* (Hungarian Freedom) of 30 October 1956, and extracts from the sentence passed by the (official) " People's Court " at the end of the trial of Imre Nagy. Two poems were read out: Gyorgy Petri[1] read out his poem " Nagy Imrerol " (About Imre Nagy), and Tamas Fodor read out " Majusi hajnal " (May dawn) written by Gyorgy Krasso at the time of his detention. Pal Maleter's widow and Aliz Halda (the companion of Miklos Gimes) described in moving words their dead loved ones and the trial which took place 25 years ago. The commemora-

[1] On Petri see *Index on Censorship*, No. 2, 1983.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tion was concluded with the playing of recordings of Imre Nagy's broadcast speeches of 1956.

We cannot reproduce here the full text of this commemoration; we reproduce instead an interview with Gyorgy Krasso[2] about the events as he recalls them, and his personal views on some controversial questions.

A Hirmondo—In your commemoration you described the lives of the executed defendants in the Imre Nagy trial. Could you summarize briefly the content of your speech?

Krasso—I think it is very difficult to do so briefly. Information about the lives of these people can be found in the former periodical of the Imre Nagy Institute in Brussels, *Szemle* (Review), Vol. 5, no. 3, 1963, and in a book published in the West entitled *Az igazsag a Nagy Imre Ugyben*.[3] It is true that it is very difficult to get hold of these publications here in Hungary, but it is however comparatively easy to have access to the Imre Nagy memorial issue of *Irodalmi Ujsag* (Literary Gazette), no. 2, 1983, published in Paris, in which all this information can be found.

However, I can say briefly that in 1958 Imre Nagy was 62 years old, and all the other defendants were 41 years old. All five defendants were communists. Imre Nagy had joined the Bolsheviks as a Hungarian prisoner-of-war in Russia at the time of the civil war, even before the Hungarian Communist Party had been founded. Losonczy and Szilagyi took part in the illegal activities of the Hungarian Communist Party during the Second World War; Pal Maleter and Miklos Gimes became communists at the end of the war. Imre Nagy was the minister who carried out the land reform—he was concerned with land distribution as Minister of Agriculture; he then worked as a university professor, and later he was again a minister, and was Prime Minister from July 1953 until April 1955, and then again from 24 October. After the war, Losonczy and Gimes were leading journalists on *Szabad Nep* (Free People), the Communist Party daily newspaper. Maleter was an officer with the Chief of Staff, Jozsef Szilagyi was one of the organizers of the new Hungarian police force in the provinces in 1945, and later headed the Personnel Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and then the security department of the Communist Party. These are all known facts, but all the same I would like to recall who these people were who were hanged after 1956, and who are now still called counter-revolutionaries, restorers of capitalism and imperialist agents.

A Hirmondo—But after all, they were not sentenced to death because of their activities in the Party . . .

Krasso—Of course not. There is another side to their lives. They were all

[2] Krasso was sentenced to 10 years' detention in 1957. On 12 February 1979 he was the first person to speak again about the events of 1956, at a public meeting, in terms of a democratic national revolution. In a private apartment in October 1981 he held a commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the revolution of 1956. He translated and annotated Bill Lomax's well-known book, *Hungary 1956* (Allison and Busby, London 1976), Hungarian *samizdat* edition entitled *Magyarorszag, 1956* (Budapest, 1979, reissued by the " Magyar szabadsaghereos vilaszovetseg "—Hungarian Freedom Fighters World Association—Calgary, Canada branch and then in Paris by A Magyar Fuzetek and Dialogues Européens, 1982).

[3] It has been published in English as *The Truth About the Imre Nagy Affair*, Secker and Warburg, London, 1959.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

communists by conviction and not out of careerist ambitions, so they soon found themselves in conflict with the Party machine. Sooner or later they had to recognize the real nature of the political power they themselves were supporting. Already in 1930, at the Second Congress of the Hungarian Party of Communists, as the Communist Party was then called, which was held in the Soviet Union, Imre Nagy was obliged to make a self-criticism for his " opportunist and rightist " views. Later, in 1949, he opposed the Rakosi Party leadership on aspects of its policy towards the peasants. In 1955 he was expelled from the Communist Party (then known as the Hungarian Workers' Party) and was readmitted to the Party only in October 1956. Losonczy was arrested in 1951 and was only released in 1954. Szilagyi was demoted in connection with the Rajk trial, and then worked as a clerk and attended night school at the university. In 1954 Gimes was forced to leave *Szabad Nep*, and was later expelled from the Party in 1955. All three were very active in the opposition to Rakosi before the revolution.

A Hirmondo—You have not said anything about Maleter . . .

Krasso—As far as I know, before the outbreak of the Hungarian revolution Maleter had had no contacts either with the Party opposition or with any other oppositional forces. Imre Nagy had comparatively few followers in the higher ranks of the armed forces before 23 October 1956,[4] but in the following days he received a little more support, though not much. Pal Maleter was one of these more recent supporters of Imre Nagy. As we heard from his widow at the commemoration of June 1953, he had told her then that when the Germans had occupied the country he had fought against them and had welcomed the Soviets as liberators. But 12 years later he was no longer able to see them as liberators.

A Hiromondo—Having reached this point, could you recall what Pal Maleter's widow said about her husband?

Krasso—Judit Gyenes said that Pal Maleter was born in Eperjes [now in Czechoslovakia] and that he was brought up in the Felvidek highlands in an atmosphere of Czechoslovak bourgeois democracy. He attended the Medical University in Prague, and was there ingrained with a hatred of Nazism. Then, being a Hungarian citizen, he had to leave Czechoslovakia, and in Budapest he presented himself at the Ludovika Officers Training School. He always wanted to be a soldier. He joined the officers' ranks in 1943, was sent to the Soviet front, and was soon taken prisoner-of-war. He attended an anti-fascist re-education school and was parachuted into Transylvania to operate in partisan units. After the war he became a General Staff officer, headed the Military Organization Department and was then commander of the " Technical Auxiliary Units " [i.e. works units]. The Kilian barracks were under his command.

Judit Gyenes also spoke about the fact that at the time of the

[4] There was a student demonstration in Budapest on that day in support of reforms, of the changes taking place in the Polish leadership at that time, and of Imre Nagy's return to power. The Stalin statue was pulled down, fighting broke out at the main radio offices, Soviet troops and tanks came in to put down the revolt. The following morning Imre Nagy was nominated Prime Minister.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Hungarian revolution Maleter was not in favour of civilians breaking into the barracks to take away weapons. But on the other hand he saw that the fighters in Corvin Alley (opposite the Kilian barracks) were workers. He would have wanted to remain neutral, but the Russians began to shoot at the Kilian barracks. He told the Ministry of Defence on the telephone that if the Kilian barracks got another cannon volley he would start fighting against the Russians. The shot arrived soon enough.

When, on the evening of 3 November, Maleter—by then Minister of Defence—was preparing to leave for negotiations at the Soviet High Command in Tokol [South Budapest], his wife pleaded with him not to go. Maleter himself was nervous; he suspected a trap. But he told his aide that family considerations could not come first; he had to go to Tokol because the country was waiting for help from him.

This is more or less what Pal Maleter's widow said. I would like to point out that the role of Pal Maleter will probably remain a much debated question. Gergley Pongratz—the former commander of the Corvin Alley units—has violently attacked Maleter in his book, recently published in America. I would also like to correct a mistake I made during the commemoration, when I said that Maleter was taken to the Soviet Union after his arrest. I heard this version of events from an ordinary soldier who had been the driver for the Hungarian negotiating team, and who had been taken to Ungvar [formerly part of Hungary, then of Czechoslovakia, now part of the Soviet Ukraine]. I have since discovered that this soldier was mistaken, since Maleter was brought from Tokol to the KGB central command in Sashalom, and subsequently to Fo utca prison together with Sandor Kopacsi.

A Hirmondo—Let us return to the members of the Imre Nagy group. Did they become the leaders of the revolution in October 1956?

Krasso—No, I certainly would not say so in such terms. It is also difficult to answer this question unambiguously. The outbreak of the revolution was not planned or organized by any of them—in fact it was not organized by anybody—and they did not follow the succession of events with any great enthusiasm at all. With the exception of Jozsef Szilagyi—who at the Polytechnic students' meeting on 22 October spoke in favour of calling the demonstration—all the other members of the Imre Nagy group were frightened of the incalculable consequences even of the demonstration itself. Imre Nagy was already Prime Minister on the morning of 24 October, but even then he tried for days to dampen the popular movement. Even Gimes and Losonczy needed three or four days to reach the conclusion that they were witnessing a popular democratic uprising. And Maleter? In the first days he was fighting against the insurgents in Corvin Alley . . .

A Hirmondo—It almost sounds as if they had been on the other side . . .

Krasso—No, not at all. I am not saying that. The problem is more complicated. Look, I will tell you what my personal opinion is. And it is possible that I may hurt some people's feelings. The revisionists [i.e. the pro-Imre Nagy communists] were not at all revolutionaries: they were

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

reformists. This is true both in relation to their objectives and to the means they used. They wanted to defeat the Rakosi-Gero clique and its support base. They wanted to ameliorate the system—to ameliorate it in an attractive, useful, democratic direction—but they hadn't settled accounts with the main Party dogmas. "*We* are the Party," Losonczy said at the Petofi circle. And the other members of the Imre Nagy group thought the same thing. They wanted more political liberty, but within the one-party system—or at least within the framework of the system guaranteeing the leading role of the Communist Party. They wanted a more rational, more balanced economic policy and a significant rise in the standard of living—but always within the framework of the centralized planned economy. They would have reduced Hungary's dependence on the Soviet Union, but they would have kept the country within the Soviet sphere of influence. By and large they were orientated towards Yugoslav Titoism. (Tito later betrayed them.) Furthermore, their methods were not revolutionary. They wanted to take the Party under their leadership. What they were attacked for later was precisely what they did *not* do: they did not want to take any of the political problems on to the streets. This attitude was motivated by tactics, ideology and interest . . .

A paradoxical situation came into being. When the revolution broke out, apart from the revisionist group there was no other opposition organized in any sense. Such a thing could not have existed, as the AVH [the political police] crushed all other attempts to organize an opposition in the bud. Not many people know that even in 1955 hangings were carried out, and what is more, for very minor political offences. In any case, only the revisionists existed as a more or less organized political force. So a few days later they finally became the leaders of the revolution—at least at the governmental and political level.

Now, not all of this applied equally to Imre Nagy. He had always been more loyal even to the Stalinist Party than his followers had been. He always respected Party discipline, but on the other hand he was more far-sighted than his followers were. It was very characteristic of him that, when in 1955 he was excluded from power and attacked in extremely violent terms, Imre Nagy addressed his self-defence and memoranda to the Central Committee of the Party. On the other hand, in his essays[5] one can find the ideas for a decentralized economy, for a multi-party system, for pluralism and, what is more, for neutrality. These two aspects of Imre Nagy's personality emerged also at the time of the revolution. In the first days his loyalty to the Party predominated. But after 28 October he accepted the demands of the democratic national revolution full-heartedly, taking them to their ultimate conclusion. From that moment on he did not move from this position—even at the cost of his life.

A Hirmondo—And who do you think was right? The reformists, or those following the revolutionary tactic?

Krasso—I think this question is very relevant—even today. The lesson of

[5] Published in the West under the title *On Communism: In Defence of the New Course*,, Thames and Hudson, London, 1957.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Hungarian revolution was not analysed anywhere in Eastern Europe. And even here in Hungary most people reached nothing more than a flat conclusion that " you must not bang your head against a brick wall " [i.e. that the uprising was futile].

I have already said that nobody planned the revolution—it emerged from the logic of events—therefore those representing a revolutionary tactic did not exist at all before 23 October 1956. The reformists had good reason to believe that after the Soviet withdrawal from Austria in 1955, after the 20th Congress of the Soviet Communist Party, it would be possible to carry out a peaceful " de-Stalinization," but that there was no prospect of carrying out violent changes. I think it is important to point out that, furthermore, even if they had seen such a possibility, they wouldn't have wanted a revolution. I believe that the revisionists, who always spoke so much about " the people " never believed in or trusted the people. They had been communists from their early youth. And the communist movement had always had an élitist character. Even if the communists sometimes made use of the spontaneous actions of the masses, they always looked at them with suspicion. They were always afraid that these movements might take another direction, different from that construed by the representatives of the so-called Revolutionary Theory. After several decades of Party work in the communist movement there may have been—and in fact there were—some well-intentioned reformers, but certainly no revolutionaries.

On the other hand, the masses had reason to suspect that the reformist programme was nothing more than a new manipulation. And that even if Imre Nagy had taken the place of [the former Stalinist leaders] Rakosi and Gero, this would not in the end have prevented things from slipping back to the old track. That is why they did not lay down their weapons even when, precisely as a direct consequence of their armed action, these changes *had* taken place. The example of Gomulka and the history of the past 15 years—the Czech reforms initiated from above and the fate of the Polish " self-limiting revolution "—proves for me that the people *were* right.

A Hirmondo—Are you saying that any reformist attempt would have been *ab ovo* [i.e. from the very beginning] mistaken?

Krasso—No. A country cannot live in permanent revolution. This can happen only for a limited length of time. The comparatively peaceful and consolidated epochs are much longer, and it is in these periods that the advocates of sensible social and economic reforms can do most for the nation. I see the problem in this point, that in Eastern Europe the ruling power cannot tolerate even the activities of reformists. (Even in today's " liberal " Hungary only the advocates of *economic* reforms—and moreover only the moderate ones among them—are allowed to speak out.) And since radical revolutionary positions cannot be articulated publicly, a false legend has begun to develop around the reformists. In the long evolutionary periods they are therefore unable to act really effectively; in a revolutionary situation (precisely because they have

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

formerly criticized official policy, and have been persecuted for this, and because of their notoriety and certain organizational ties) they actually play an influential role in setting the tone, which is then used for a reformist channelling of the people's radical movement. Now, this fact can have tragic consequences in revolutionary circumstances. In Eastern Europe this problem is always present.

A Hirmondo—But, after all, in 1956 the Hungarians made a revolution. Wasn't it precisely this which led to the tragic consequences?

Krasso—The Hungarian revolution has been the only movement in Eastern Europe which has reflected clearly and uncompromisingly what the common aspiration of these nations is. And the Hungarian movement was the only one that was able to win. Despite the fact that the overwhelming external forces could have suppressed it in blood, despite the fact that the whole world was to leave it unaided, despite even the fact of its defeat, the Hungarian revolution brought more results for the Hungarians than any other movement in Eastern Europe. I think the best reform communists—and in the first instance those executed in the Imre Nagy trial—acknowledged this fact at the end of October, and, to use grand words, they put the people before the Party, Hungary before foreign interests. That is why they had to die.

A Hirmondo—Are you saying that in the first days of November 1956 there came into being complete harmony between the insurgents and the government?

Krasso—Apparently so. The government accepted all the most important demands of the uprising. And in one of his radio speeches Imre Nagy especially emphasized the fact that the government acknowledged the local people's representative bodies created in the course of the revolution, and would have based its action on them.

But the two aspects of the revisionists' policy I mentioned before were also present later on. The government did not consider its position sufficiently stable, and at the same time it believed Soviet intervention to be avoidable only through diplomatic steps and the fastest possible consolidation. It devoted most of its energy to this consolidation, neglecting in the meanwhile to prepare for the defence of the country. Left-wing students and intellectual organizations started an enormous propaganda campaign for the Imre Nagy government. The largest insurgent units were visited by pro-governmental agitators and cadets—apparently to teach them the use of arms. Bela Kiraly, Sandor Kopacsi and Maleter created the Revolutionary Security Committee [" Forradalmi Karhatalmi Bizottsag "] and the National Guard [" Nemzetorseg "] and they wanted to disarm the insurgents who refused to join the pro-governmental organizations. Bela Kiraly arrested Dudas [leader of a group called the Hungarian National Revolutionary Committee] and according to a declaration made by Kiraly after he had emigrated, he would have guaranteed respect for the government's authority with the use of arms, had it been endangered. If Kopacsi is not exaggerating in his account, it would appear that an armed action was planned for 4

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

November to arrest many prominent personalities who did not recognize Imre Nagy's authority. A great propaganda effort was made to stop the " senseless strike " and to start work again on 5 November. Now, the " street " had a different policy from that of the government; it considered Soviet intervention to be the main threat, and remained at arms.

A Hirmondo—But weren't all these steps you mention taken by the government and left-wing forces to avert the counter-revolutionary danger? Do you think there was no such danger?

Krasso—Inside the country there was no such danger. The Stalinists were in hiding, their leaders had fled abroad, and former AVH men *asked* to be taken into protective detention. Who could have been threatening the revolution?

A Hirmondo—I did not make myself clear. I was thinking of forces attempting to create a right-wing regime.

Krasso—It is true, there were forces with such aspirations, but these forces were not counter-revolutionary; they were—as you say—a " right-wing " phenomenon. A right-wing exists in every democratic country, and it would have been strange if these right-wing forces *hadn't* existed in Hungary, especially after the irrational and cruel Rakosi period; but the strength of the right wing shouldn't be overestimated. The bulk of the insurgents did not want any kind of restoration to take place. Everywhere it was being proclaimed from the rooftops that " the factories and the land will not be given back," and nobody even whispered " let us give back the factories and the land " [to their former owners]. On the political scene the leaders of the former governmental coalition parties declared their support for the Imre Nagy government. Mindszenty [the Roman Catholic Primate of Hungary, imprisoned in 1948 and released during the revolution] enjoyed great respect, but if he had really proclaimed a policy of restoration he would have found very few followers.

A Hirmondo—You say that those executed at the Imre Nagy trial had accepted the insurgents' demands. What exactly was their role at the time of the revolution?

Krasso—Imre Nagy was Prime Minister. He demanded the complete withdrawal of the Soviet troops. He proclaimed the restoration of the multi-party system, the neutrality of Hungary and its withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact. Geza Losonczy was made minister without portfolio. Miklos Gimes edited the newspaper *Magyar Szabasag* (Hungarian Freedom); after 4 November he tried to create a coalition of the revolutionary forces called the Hungarian Democractic Independence Movement and published an illegal newspaper, *23 October*. Pal Maleter switched to the insurgents' side, although he had first been sent to suppress them at the Kilian barracks. As Minister of Defence he negotiated with the Soviet troops. Jozsef Szilagyi worked in parliament as secretary to Imre Nagy.

A Hirmondo—How were they arrested?

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Krasso—Well, as these facts are well-known I can briefly say that Maleter was arrested by General Serov [head of the KGB] in the night of 3 November at the Tokol Soviet Military Command at the meeting of the Soviet-Hungarian Mixed Committee, in crude violation of international law. Despite the written assurances given by the Hungarian government, Imre Nagy, Geza Losonczy and Jozsef Szilagyi were treacherously kidnapped on 22 November when they left the Yugoslav embassy compound, and later they were taken to Romania with the other members of the group. In the spring of 1957 they were taken back to Budapest from their confinement near lake Snegov in Romania by the Hungarian political police [under the direction of Colonel Sandor Rajnai, later Hungarian ambassador in Moscow]. Miklos Gimes was arrested in the apartment of one of his acquaintances on 5 December 1956.

A Hirmondo—What was the trial like and how did it proceed?

Krasso—It was prepared with total secrecy; even we hadn't heard anything about it in prison, whereas usually we got to know about the cases being prepared. All the defendants were kept in Fo utca prison. Geza Losonczy was murdered in December 1957 (this seems to have taken place on the 21st of that month) as a result of his being force fed during hunger strike. The first day of the Imre Nagy trial was held under Judge Zoltan Rado on 6 February 1958. This trial was, however, soon postponed with some specious excuse—it appears that at the time they hadn't yet decided the fate of the defendants. At the trial—but also during the interrogations—Jozsef Szilagyi spoke out so enthusiastically in favour of the revolution that his case was separated from that of the others, and already in April he was sentenced to death by Judge Vida. It is not known when and in what circumstances he was murdered—it is very likely that he was *not* taken to Gyujto, where the death sentences were usually carried out. In the subsequent official communiqué it was not even mentioned that his case had been separated from the others. The remaining members of the Imre Nagy group were sentenced on 15 June (a Sunday!), again by Judge Vida, at the end of the subsequent series of trials which had begun on 9 June. It was not possible to appeal against the sentence; there was no second instance trial. The appeals for pardon were turned down. Imre Nagy and Pal Maleter had refused to confess to any crime, and Miklos Gimes acknowledged only his responsibility for what had happened [during the revolution]. Of the remaining eight defendants, five were sentenced to long periods of imprisonment (Sandor Kopacsi to life imprisonment; Ferenc Donath to 12 years; Ferenc Janosi to eight years; Zoltan Tildy to six years and Miklos Vasorhelyi to five years). Imre Nagy, Pal Maleter and Miklos Gimes were sentenced to death. The death sentences were carried out the following day on the morning of 16 June. The public was informed of what happened only one day later, on 17 June, through an official communiqué.

A Hirmondo—Is it known what Imre Nagy said when he availed himself of the right to speak his last words?

Krasso—What became known was what he did *not* say. The official press

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and the official white book on the case[6] obviously contained nothing on the subject. But almost every publication issued in the West contained the text of a dramatic declaration. According to this version Imre Nagy, availing himself of the right to speak his last words, is reported to have said that he had twice tried to save the honour of socialism in the valley of the Danube, but that in both cases he had been prevented from doing so. He was now ready to give his life for his ideals, and he was sure that sooner or later he would be rehabilitated, and that three times as many people would come to his reburial as had come to the burial of Rajk [which took place in 1956]. And that he was afraid of only one thing—that his murderers would be amongst those commemorating him. And so forth. A similar version of this last speech can also be found in Kopacsi's book.[7]

Kopacsi was of course present at the trial, but even so it seems that these words were in fact never pronounced. According to a version which would seem to be more accurate, Imre Nagy did *not* avail himself of the right to speak his last words; he said that the circumstances of the trial proved there was no point in saying anything. However, later, when the death sentence had been passed, and the judge, in accordance with the rules of judicial proceedings, asked him whether he wanted to appeal for pardon, he replied that he was not going to; he said he would have been rehabilitated by the international labour movement. Now, taking into consideration Imre Nagy's character, I think this version—so far unpublished—is more likely than the other one.

A Hirmondo—Aliz Halda also spoke about the trial at the June commemoration. What did she recall about these events?

Krasso—Aliz Halda was Miklos Gimes' companion. She didn't say very much. She felt it was impossible to find the words to express her feelings, even approximately. They had intended to marry. She said she would have liked to have had many children. What happened had destroyed her life. In that year and a half before the execution, she was allowed to see Miklos Gimes four times, and she received 10 letters from him. But in the last six months she received nothing more, and was not allowed to see him.

Halda said that the trial was held in such secrecy that even the defence lawyers had to sleep in the Fo utca prison compound. There was good reason for this, as the trial was unlawful in every respect; not only from the point of view of historical justice—the Imre Nagy group had taken up the cause for which all sections of the population had quite clearly sided—it was also unlawful according to Hungarian laws valid at the time. Imre Nagy's government was a legitimate one; it was established according to the rule. It was supported by the Party, and what is more by

[6] Hungarian People's Republic, *The Counter-Revolutionary Conspiracy of Imre Nagy and his Accomplices*, Budapest, Information Bureau of the Council of Ministries, 1958. Also available in English.

[7] *In the Name of the Working Class*, French edition, Laffont, Paris, 1979; English edition, London, 1979.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Soviet Union. Janos Kadar was a member of this government right to the end. And even after the kidnapping of the Imre Nagy group on 22 November 1956, Kadar stated that no legal action would be taken against them: " this is our promise and we will keep it." This is what Halda was talking about. Indeed, this promise had been made through diplomatic channels—in verbal statements and letters addressed to the Yugoslav government.

A Hirmondo—What were the conditions in which the members of the Imre Nagy group were kept in prison? At the commemoration you spoke about your personal recollections.

Krasso—All of them were in Fo utca—to be precise, Gyorskocsi utca prison. After the trial the surviving defendants were taken to Gyujto [on the outskirts of Budapest] and then to the nearby town of Vac. The executions were also carried out in Gyujto. I think their living conditions in prison were more or less similar to those of other prisoners. Only in the period immediately preceding the second part of the June resumption of the trial were living quarters and food slightly improved. They were taken to the writing rooms on the top floor of the prison. This technique of " amelioration for the trial " was also used by the AVH in other political trials, for example the Rajk trial.

A Hirmondo—And how did the other prisoners in Fo utca live? Were you there at the time?

Krasso—Yes. I was arrested on 15 November 1956, and three days later—having first been taken to the 5th district Soviet Command, and then to the general one—I was brought to Fo utca. Maleter and Kopacsi must also have been there, but I didn't know that at the time. The prison was in the hands of the Russians. The interrogations were conducted by KGB officials through interpreters. The minutes of these interrogations were subsequently taken to the Soviet Union; at least they were not available for the later judicial proceedings. All of this shows quite clearly what the reality of the situation was, who really was wielding power in the country.

I must say that our treatment by the Soviets was far more humane than that which we later received from the Hungarians. It is true that living conditions were fairly primitive. For example articles of personal hygiene were forbidden (relatives were not even informed of our whereabouts), so instead of toilet paper we used pages out of the mostly Soviet books in the prison library. There were no provisions for washing or changing our underwear, and so forth. But the Soviet interrogation officer (a KGB lieutenant-colonel) never beat me at any time; at most he gave me threatening looks. The Russian guards—simple KGB soldiers—were friendly and often gave us *mahorka* tobacco and a piece of *Pravda* to smoke it with. A cell usually contained two prisoners. In the day-time we could do virtually anything we liked; we could even sleep. We were able to speak through the wall with the prisoners in the adjacent cells. Sometimes the noise was very loud—for example when the women in the prison started singing. On such occasions the guards used to walk up and

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

down shouting " *tikho, tikho* " (" quiet, quiet " in Russian, which sounds like " whew! " in Hungarian).

The Hungarian political police " took us in charge " at the beginning of January (at least this was the case on the floor on which I was being held at the time). We realized this had happened one morning when we heard a kick on the door and a stream of abuse in Hungarian. It emerged that we were forbidden to lie on the bed or to speak loudly, and that the bed had to be made in an orderly, uniform way. For that matter this bed-making mania (derived from the best Habsburg empire traditions) continued throughout our lives in prison.

With the Hungarians our hygiene improved slightly. Once a week we were shaved, given soap and toilet paper (but usually no books), and sometimes even clean underwear. But we were treated far more brutally. The shouts and abuse of the guards became a permanent feature, and sometimes prisoners were also beaten up. Later this set-up changed: we were taken into solitary cells where a dumb silence replaced the shouts. Previously it had been dark at night, and we had been allowed to sleep as we liked. Now, instead, a very strong light shone above the cell door, day and night. At night it shone directly into our eyes, because we were only allowed to sleep in a strictly ordered way: head facing the barred and opaque double-window opposite the door, we had to lie flat on our backs with our arms outside the blanket. Of course, arranged like this most of us could not sleep, but even if we managed to we would then turn on to our sides in our sleep. So the guards would kick at the cell door throughout the night. In the day-time we were quite exhausted, but it was strictly forbidden to lie down. This was a cynical method of breaking a person's will. I say cynical because every day a male nurse visited us, as the official doctor (Doctor Bence) was too important an individual to visit us himself. This male nurse was willing to give us a sleeping pill on request. But if we took one the situation was simply aggravated, because we still couldn't sleep so we were even more exhausted the next day.

The isolation in which we were kept was part of the pyschological treatment. We were not allowed to keep anything in the cell, and even the basin for washing, the bucket of water, and the broom were given to us for only a few minutes every day. We were not allowed to speak to anyone. The guards handed us the mess-tin, bread and water through the cell shutter, without uttering a word. We were asked only one thing by them every evening: " Doctor or interrogation? " This was because we were always permitted to ask to see the doctor or the interrogator, but regardless of whom we asked for, weeks or months could pass with no hearing or examination. The purpose of this was to make us long for such a hearing, and to see it as a redemption. This imposed dumbness, this inactivity and solitude, led some prisoners with weaker nerves to the edge of of insanity. We began to see the whole world in an unreal way. Sometimes a cell-mate was taken in for a few days, but later it almost always emerged that he was an informer who went from one cell to another to do his work.

It was in April 1957 that I was taken away from Fo utca prison, but six

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

months later, in October 1957, I was taken back there from Marianosztra [near the Czechoslovakian border]. At that time I had alreay been sentenced to a definite term of 10 years' imprisonment, and further investigations were being carried out in connection with a case involving the Merei group. [Merei was a revisionist psychiatrist.] So I spent another three months in Fo utca prison. Living conditions had not changed, but now, perhaps because in the interim I had been in the continuously buzzing and " eventful " Marko prison [the Budapest jail for prisoners awaiting trial], Gyujto and Marianosztra, the inhuman silence, the solitude and sterile closedness of Fo utca seemed even more frightening. Every now and then I heard the prisoners crying out with pain. I may also have heard the cries of Geza Losonczy. Now and then car engines were made to hum loudly in the courtyard of the prison—hangings were carried out, as Gyujto was unable to keep pace with the number of executions. I was interrogated on the first day only, and then three months later in January 1958; with no further words spoken by the interrogator, I was taken away. It is probable that at that time the whole apparatus of political investigation was switched over to the preparation of the Imre Nagy trial, and other cases were temporarily put to one side. In fact, I heard that Captain Virag (who had interrogated me in October) had become the interrogator of Pal Locsei [a revisionist journalist, formerly on *Szabad Nep*. In the end, Locsei, who was a close friend of Gimes, was sentenced separately; he was not included among the defendants in the Imre Nagy trial because he had firmly refused to give evidence against his companions].

A Hirmondo—Do you mean to say that the selection and the role of the defendants had not been fully predetermined?

Krasso—Of course they hadn't. One should remember the Rajk case in which, for example, Bela Szasz was excluded for reasons similar to Locsei's. The defendants and the charges were always changed according to the political needs of the time. For example, in the 1957 trials [the Eorsi-Angyal case, the Geza Pecs-Szirmai and Fatyol-Cselik cases] before any sentence could be passed, they extracted from one of the proceedings the case of Istvan Angyal, from another that of Otto Szirmai, and from a third that of Ferenc Cselik, and, putting these together with some other defendants, they made a separate proceeding from this group. Many aspects were taken into consideration. For example, in one case only a limited number of defendants could be hanged. Of the six men mentioned, in the end three were executed. I too started out in a case that had originally been devised for at least five defendants, one of whom was Laszlo Gyurko. But in the end I remained on my own—I made myself into an organization—and Gyurko became a witness for the prosecution.The purpose in this case was to make a differentiation in the sentencing. Gyurko was also sentenced but he got six months on probation for agitation, whilst I got 10 years for organizing activities against the system. One's willingness to cooperate with the investigating authorities was very important. It would not be an exaggeration to say

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that on the basis of one's reactions one could be hanged, but one could also end up as a member of parliament or Prime Minister. [In fact Gyurko subsequently had a flourishing literary and political career as a writer, theatre director and member of parliament. He recently wrote the official biography of Janos Kadar.]

A Hirmondo—Was a variety of options also taken into account for the Imre Nagy trial?

Krasso—Certainly. In the first place, even at the beginning of March 1957, only the Maleter-Kopacsi trial had been planned. After all, they were actually issued with a written charge which referred to their mutinous behaviour in their capacity as military and police officer respectively—but this was soon withdrawn. The preparation and subsequent calling off of the trial may have been connected with the hysteria over the " MUK " slogans of March 1957. [MUK stands for " *Marciusban ujra kezdjuk*," " in March we will start again "—an opposition slogan of the time similar to the Polish one of 1982 " the winter is yours, the spring will be ours."] It seems certain that at that time not even the outlines of the Imre Nagy trial had been even vaguely defined. Most of the defendants in the 1958 trial were enjoying Romanian " hospitality," in which country Imre Nagy was also offered a ministerial position providing he made a self-criticism. Zoltan Tildy was still free at that time and living in his Budapest flat. The concept of the " organization-treason-rebellion-of-the-imperialist-hirelings who directed the counter-revolution " began to take shape later. From the spring of 1957 until June 1958 statements with this sort of colouring were made more and more frequently. But even at this stage the plans were changed several times. According to Kopacsi's memoirs there was also a period when Bela Kiraly—who had emigrated to the West—would have been included among the defendants. Then Geza Losonczy became unsuitable for the role which had been assigned to him at the trial because his mental condition had been strained by the living conditions in Fo utca prison. He was removed from the list of defendants by his death. There was a change of policy in February 1958: the case of Jozsef Szilagyi was separated without being announced. The actual selection of the defendants on a political basis is also acknowledged in the white book about the trial which was issued later, and in which there is an attempt to explain why there was *no* judicial process against Gyorgy Lukacs, Julia Rajk, Szilard Ujhelyi, Zoltan Vas and others, despite the fact that this group included those " who had brought damage to the Hungarian people through their activities." There was an important change in the formulation of charges and in the motivation for the sentence in the final trial in that connections with Yugoslavia stood out as one of the main offences against the state.

A Hirmondo—So would you explain the final form which the trial took as the result of foreign policy factors?

Krasso—Only in part. The Soviet propaganda campaign against Yugoslavia which began in the spring of 1958, and the gesture towards China, undoubtedly played their part. However, I believe that the significance of

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

these things is often overestimated. The Stalinists in the Party under the leadership of Revai [the former Stalinist leader who died in 1959] had from the very beginning demanded the incrimination of the revisionists, and the official declarations also became increasingly threatening. The purpose of the trial, which had been prepared under the direction of Sumilin [the Soviet KGB colonel], was to prevent any further dissolution inside the Soviet bloc. They wanted to show both the Hungarians and the other nations of Eastern Europe that they would not tolerate the weakening of Party control and their relationship with the Soviet Union even in " revisionist " or " Popular Front " forms. It is likely that this is why Tildy had to be taken together with the revisionists in the end. [Tildy had been the leader of a government coalition party.] They attained their objective. For another 10 years until 1968 dead silence enfolded Eastern Europe. And what of Hungary? The country sank into political torpor. They achieved the result that even after more than a quarter of a century the opposition groups still see the 1956 option, the option of national revolution, as hopeless. Not only was the Imre Nagy trial necessary to obtain this result, but also several hundreds—perhaps thousands—of hangings, the imprisonment and internment of tens of thousands, and many other things besides.

A Hirmondo—In your opinion, who took the decision on the death sentences?

Krasso—The decision was probably taken in Moscow, on the advice of Sumilin.

A Hirmondo—Many people think that Janos Kadar could have prevented Imre Nagy's execution.

Krasso—Nobody can be certain about this. Perhaps not even he himself knows. It is certain however that the leaders of the Soviet Party and the Hungarian Stalinists exerted strong pressure on Kadar. But even if the final decision was taken in the Kremlin, it might still have been possible to bargain for the defendants' lives. Kopacsi says that his life was also bargained for over the telephone with Khrushchev. In my opinion, Kadar was already indispensable to the Soviets at that time, so they could hardly have contemplated his resignation. One Hungarian Prime Minister had already committed suicide rather than break his word.[8] However, there is no sign that Kadar would ever have threatened his resignation, nor that he ever took any other step to prevent the mass of political murders—because the question concerns not only the Imre Nagy group, but also hundreds, perhaps thousands, of others.

Furthermore, the death sentences carried out conveyor-belt fashion were not made in Moscow. The Kadar speeches before and after the Imre Nagy trial were in line with the mass of statements authorizing these sentences. I am not saying that Janos Kadar was happy with these cruel events; but it remains a fact that with the execution of Imre Nagy he got rid of his most dangerous rival—*the* man who could have replaced him in

[8] Pal Teleki, who committed suicide in 1941 rather than break the promise of non-aggression he had made in 1940 to Yugoslavia.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the later period of consolidation of the conciliation of government and nation.

A Hirmondo—How were the executions actually carried out?

Krasso—I have already referred to the fact that in January 1958 I was removed from Fo utca and taken to Gyujto prison. Here, at the end of March, I was put on the ground floor of Kisfoghaz [a small jail inside the Gyujto complex] near the cells of those sentenced to death. This transfer may have been a continuation of the investigations concerning me—part of an isolating and personality-breaking treatment. I lived for five months among those sentenced to death; more exactly, in one of the adjacent cells.

At the time there may have been 40 or 50 prisoners. Their number was more or less steady, despite the fact that executions were being carried out continuously. There were mornings in which several people—once even 11—were hanged, one after another. New prisoners sentenced to death were a regular feature of prison life. They were crowded three or four together in narrow, six-square-metre cells. In the majority of cases, these prisoners had been sentenced in the first instance; there was therefore a possibility that they might be reprieved as a result of a change of sentence to one in the second instance, or of a subsequent pardon. But there were very few cases in which this happened—on the contrary, the second instance sentences were actually harsher than those in the first instance.

They were treated in a very brutal manner; more than once they were beaten up with truncheons. This happened for example to Geza Pecs' cell-mates when it was discovered that Geza Pecs had managed to obtain a small piece of glass with which he had cut his veins in the night. He bled to death in front of his cell-mates, but he escaped his hanging, planned for the following morning.

Two empty cells were used as " last-night " cells; those who were taken there were chained up to prevent them from committing some " irreparable act " [i.e. suicide]. They were allowed to write letters, but it appears that these letters were in fact never delivered to their relatives.

However, the majority of those sentenced to death were never taken to these cells. This wouldn't even have been possible if more than two executions had been planned for the following day. When they were collected they weren't told to take their belongings with them and it wasn't even necessary for them to be fully dressed. It was from this that they understood immediately that they wouldn't be coming back. They stepped out from their cells and the four guards seized them, their hands were handcuffed or shackled to their legs and they were taken out to the courtyard of the building.

The executions were always carried out by hanging, at approximately 6 am, in the courtyard of the Kisfoghaz near the wall of the building. We always knew there would be one execution or more when we heard hammering at dawn. The beams used as gallows were wedged into those four or five square-shaped openings which were normally covered by an

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

iron plate. On such occasions reveille, the bringing of water and of breakfast were delayed, and the guards, walking silently in felt slippers, kept looking through the peep-holes of the cell doors to see if there were any uncalled for activity, movement or suspicious signs. We heard the trampling of feet, doors being flung open, the clinking of chains and the prisoner being taken out shouting his own name for the last time and calling goodbye to some former cell-mate; and he almost always invoked the name of freedom or Hungarian independence. There were certain cases of people who wept, who had to be dragged out, who were still trying to prove their innocence, who lost their voices; and there were those who called on their companions to avenge them, and those who struggled with their executioners.

The executioner was Major Kovacs. I remember the names of three of his four assistants: Sergeants-Major Karacsony and Berkes, and Sergeant Steinbacher.

Then we heard those indescribable but characteristic noises coming from the courtyard: the sounds of trampling, jostling, rattling, some official text being read out loud, and the bold or faltering last words of the accused. Almost without exception these last words were about the revolution, Hungarian liberty and independence. Routine life in the prison resumed soon afterwards: the cell door was opened, the guards on duty entered, and we had to report, standing to attention: " Mr Warden, I convey my respects and I report that the number of detainees in this cell is three. There have been no specific abnormal occurrences during the course of the night."

It was known that the chains or shackles were removed from the prisoner [sentenced to death]; his hands were tied in front of him; he was made to stand on a stool; a rope was noosed around his neck and the end of it passed through a hook at the top of a beam; another rope (driven through a pulley-wheel attached to the lower part of the beam) was secured to his legs which were tied together; his face was covered with a white hood; the stool was kicked aside; the executioner's assistants pulled on the rope at the legs, and the prisoner's neck was broken by the twisting and lifting of the head out of its socket; this was carried out by the executioner standing on a ladder. The death was certified by the prison doctor, Dr Szabo—a dentist.

The body, or bodies were then carried for a short distance past the rear area of a prison workshop which produced children's toys, into some premises reserved for this purpose; the bodies were put into hessian sacks and flimsy wooden caskets, and were then carried out in the early morning hours to section 301 of Rakoskeresztur Cemetery, which faces on to the prison, and were there placed in unmarked pits.

Imre Nagy, Miklos Gimes and Pal Maleter were probably executed under similar circumstances. The executioner, Major Kovacs, reported ill, and it was rumoured that he was replaced by his assistants Berkes and Karacsony. [Karacsony was later, in 1964, to become Kovac's successor.]

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Hirmondo—Were you still at Kisfoghaz when Imre Nagy and his companions were executed?

Krasso—No. All of us, including those who had been sentenced to death, were suddenly moved during the last days of May or the first few days of June to " Right 2," that is to say the Second Department of the Right Star section of the main building of the Budapest National Prison [Gyujto] on the ground floor. We hadn't known anything of the reasons for this transfer. We had interpreted the fact that for some time after this—i.e. until the first part of June—no executions had been carried out, as a promising signal. At the time we did not know that they were getting the place ready for the Imre Nagy group in Kisfoghaz. Then, on the morning of 16 June, we prisoners in the Right Star—which was a long way from Kisfoghaz—once again observed the familiar signs: late reveille, delays in emptying and returning the slops-bucket, in giving out water, in breakfast; the pacing about and peering in of the guards. By the afternoon we realized that Imre Nagy had been hanged with two others. We only later discovered the identity of the others.

The majority of the prisoners were not communist sympathisers by a long shot. However, the execution of Imre Nagy was a shocking event for everyone. He was a symbol. The revolution, Hungarian liberty and independence went to the grave with him.

A Hirmondo—The leader article in the first number of *Irodalmi Ujsag* [now published in Paris] for 1983 describes the circumstances of the execution. Is its account accurate?

Krasso—There are some errors in it. I do not know of any case in which a gas mask was forced over the heads of those who were to be executed, as is alleged happened to Imre Nagy in this article. The bodies were not taken to the cemetery in the evening, but in the morning, and not in a properly sprung carriage, but in a creaking one. Then the author of this account seems to think that " a closed off, completely sound-proof, small room without windows " would have been built near the gallows even before June 1958. In fact this room was built only *after* Imre Nagy was executed—probably to prevent any sounds from being heard and photos from being taken. At this juncture I would also like to point out that the memoirs of Sandor Kopacsi would seem to give a false or unlikely version of the events. It is not true, as he states, that the graves in the cemetery are numbered. I also think it unlikely that Janos Kadar would have been present at the execution of Imre Nagy, and I do not believe Kopacsi's statements to the effect that Kadar and other leading functionaries would have had to listen to the Imre Nagy trial from beginning to end in a room adjacent to the courtroom. How could Kopacsi have known that this was so?

A Hirmondo—What was the international echo of the Imre Nagy trial? What have you heard about it?

Krasso—I read in the book *The Truth About the Imre Nagy Affair* [published in the West] that the Italian Socialist Nenni returned his Stalin Prize on the same night Marcello Venturi, an editor of *l'Unità* [the

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Italian Communist Party newspaper], resigned. Nehru was shocked and protested against the " cruel and base procedure "; Krishna Menon, Mendès-France, Camus, Sartre's review *Les Temps Modernes*, and writers, artists and public personalities all over the world also protested. Western communist parties lost many of their members, just as they had after 4 November 1956. In Hungary there was silence. I do not know of anyone who even tried to raise his voice against it. What about the intelligentsia? Ten months previously more than 250 writers (almost all the important Hungarian writers) were successfully pressured into signing a memorandum addressed to the UN, in which they proclaimed their confidence in the Kadar government, and in which they gave justification for the Soviet military intervention.

A Hirmondo—Was the Imre Nagy trial the beginning of the repression or the end of it?

Krasso—Neither. The repression—the executions and the heavy prison sentences—began at the end of 1956 and lasted for three years, until 1 January 1960, although there were a few executions in 1960, and moreover in 1961 in connection with cases relating to 1956. The Imre Nagy trial was conducted in the period of harshest repression and revenge.

A Hirmondo—And now, one last question. How was the commemoration of 13 June prepared? Did you know in advance that Radio Free Europe would be transmitting a recording of it in one of its programmes, and have you suffered any repercussions as a result of it?

Krasso—Very briefly: 1) This commemoration would have had relevance even years and decades ago, but only that morning did we decide to hold it, which is why it was so improvised in character; 2) I didn't know that Radio Free Europe was going to transmit it, and I would certainly have preferred it if Radio Kossuth [the Hungarian first programme] had broadcast it; 3) during the first few days of August I was summoned to the Passport Department of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and two police officers told me that my requests for a passport—both the one for the West and the one for socialist countries—had been refused because of this " act " that I had committed. However, the fact of the matter is that in my life I have never had a Western passport [i.e. for travelling in Western countries] and the " red " one [i.e. for travelling in Soviet bloc countries] has also been taken away from me several times, the last occasion being in 1981. So the official explanation did not seem so persuasive to me.

A Hirmondo—Forgive me, but I have one additional last question. This year Hungarian emigration circles have come up with an initiative. They have asked the Hungarian government to reveal the whereabouts of the graves of those who were executed. What is your opinion of this move? Do you think the Hungarian government could rehabilitate Imre Nagy and his co-defendants?

Krasso—I fully support this initiative. Decency and piety demand—and what is more, our laws, which forbid the violation of the memory of the dead, prescribe—that the graves should be marked with a name, and the

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

identity of those who lie in them made public. But I don't think that the Hungarian authorities will do it without broad internal social pressure; to my knowledge even the most recent requests from the relatives of the executed were refused not many months ago. There are many reasons for this refusal, not least because to grant these requests could start a chain reaction in which the identity and number of those executed 25 years ago may emerge, and this is a very large number. I consider the rehabilitation of those executed to be even more unlikely. The same people who carried out or permitted the repression are still in the leadership. I believe that only the Hungarian nation itself can change the destiny of section 301 of the cemetery.

THE WORLD TODAY

STUDENTS OF CURRENT AFFAIRS, to be well informed, need the facts In THE WORLD TODAY, the monthly journal of the Royal Institute of International Affairs, experts bring to the general reader up-to-date and reliable information on world affairs.

Authoritative and objective, THE WORLD TODAY deals primarily with international problems but also includes articles on internal political and economic conditions in individual countries or regions, written by authors with first-hand knowledge. Short comment in 'Notes of the Month' puts current developments into perspective and provides a background to events of international significance.

Annual subscription (12 issues a year including postage inland and overseas)

Vol. 40	1984
USA	$40
UK	£15
Elsewhere	£20

Published under the auspices of the

ROYAL INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS LONDON

by the Oxford University Press
Walton Street, Oxford OX2 6DP

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

What Orwell Means for Our Time

Lewis S. Feuer

WHEREIN lies the greatness of George Orwell's *1984*? What makes this title everywhere a byword among people yearning to preserve or achieve freedom? When I spent a semester in 1963 as a visiting scholar with the Soviet Academy of Science, young graduate students and instructors in universities at Moscow, Leningrad, Tashkent and Tbilisi would indicate to me with pride that they knew *1984*; they referred to it by title, not by the author's name. In Moscow, its most vigorous and active university dissident (happily, I hear, still unbroken in will and intelligence) found in *1984* a guide to the totalitarian workings of the Soviet system. In Tashkent, the secretary of the Institute of Philosophy grew concerned when the word " totalitarian " was used inadvertently by one of the faculty to characterize the Soviet system; Orwell corresponded to common sense, and was therefore hard to repress, despite all the Soviet Dialectic Grammar, its " *Newspeak*."

For George Orwell transmuted into classical literary form all that a generation of brilliant, searching writers, chiefly former communists, had been trying to tell the world. Their outstanding figures were Ignazio Silone, Arthur Koestler, Victor Serge, Franz Borkenau. " There has been nothing resembling, for instance, *Fontamara* or *Darkness at Noon* in England," noted Orwell, " because there is almost no English writer to whom it has happened to see totalitarianism from the inside."[1] The European anti-totalitarians, graduates of prisons and concentration camps, had been " obliged to break the law in order to engage in politics at all." Orwell himself, however, traversed the equivalent of a communist experience. At first, as a volunteer with the Loyalists in the Spanish Civil War, he had " preferred the communist viewpoint " to that of the other political groups. Seriously wounded in battle, Orwell then saw how the communists with duplicity destroyed the socialists and anarchists who had saved the Spanish Republic; his own friend, Major Kopp, was tortured almost to death by Soviet agents, and everywhere were " posters screaming that I and everyone like me was a Fascist spy."[2] By contrast, British academic socialist intellectuals and Soviet sympathizers led lives of placid ideology; socialist idealists such as Laski and G. D. H. Cole, progenitors of what Orwell called Ingsoc, English socialism, were cheerfully confident that the Marxian dialectic would transfigure dictatorship into democracy; they nurtured in their minds what Engels called the dialectical " unity of opposites," that naturally evolved into the three slogans of the Party in Oceania: War is Peace, Freedom is Slavery, Ignorance is Strength.

[1] George Orwell, *Dickens, Dali and Others* (1946, rep. New York (n.d.)) pp. 186–187.
[2] George Orwell, *Homage to Catalonia* (1938, rep. 1980), p. 212.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Orwell's book became an instantaneous classic, the purest expression of the cold war that began in 1945. It evoked the anxiety that almost every member of Western civilization was beginning to feel at the prospect that the world might be engulfed by the totalitarian power. Orwell could reach the average reader in a way that his great predecessors, Silone and Koestler, could not; for the heroes of their novels were communist party intellectuals involved in a tragic self-liberation from the party, its programme, principles, impersonalities, and collective self-immolation. The average man, however, had little concern with the intellectual and ethical dilemmas of the communist party intellectual, a breed as foreign to him as a Franciscan friar. But Winston Smith, working in the office of Oceania's Ministry of Truth, filing papers, writing memoranda to subordinates and superordinates, was a familiar type, like any governmental or company desk employee; every reader knew the sort. Winston Smith was a descendant, one might say, of Lemuel Gulliver. He was no mathematical genius as had been the hero of the novel *We* by Yevgeny Zamyatin. That book was indeed a prescient work; written in 1920–21, its author, a former Bolshevik and a chief figure in virtually the last independent circle of writers in the Soviet Union, sketched the warpings of the spirit that were in the offing as the communist regime cultivated what he called the " instinct of unfreedom ". But its hero was a scientific genius, the Builder of the Integral and a master of the $\sqrt{-1}$; no novel of influence, from Richardson, Defoe and Swift onwards, has had a genius as its hero. We can identify with Gulliver or Robinson Crusoe, and know their predicaments. Almost every reader can empathize with the two lovers, Julia and Winston, desperately looking for a hiding-place from the omnipresent screens and microphones of Big Brother.

ALMOST a century ago, Edward Bellamy in the United States wrote the most universally read of modern Utopias, *Looking Backward.* His hero Julian West, " trans-temporalized " to the year 2000 AD, found an America whose nationalized industries were ruled by a central planning board organized on military lines. (Yet somehow Bellamy was confident that individual rights would be safeguarded.) A tremendous enthusiasm for " Nationalism " was engendered in the United States; Bellamy Clubs flourished. By contrast, Marxists had always avoided Utopias. Marx probably wanted to silence the fears and doubts he felt concerning what life under socialism would be like; he probably had read what his friend Heinrich Heine had forecast—that fishwives would wrap their wares in waste-paper made up of pages from his poems. Marx and Engels alike, both of whom detested socialist party committees, probably realized that under the tyranny of party officials their lives would have been those of " bourgeois " misfits. Taking refuge in their " dialectic method," they claimed that it would be unscientific to forecast the way in which a socialist society would work; they somehow " knew " that it would be a " higher " form of society, that its state would wither away, that the sexes would enjoy liberated relations, and that all persons would

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

delight in an alternation of activities, and an absence of routine. Thus, with their " dialectic method," Marx and Engels were crypto-Utopians.

Orwell's achievement was to annihilate the Utopian and crypto-Utopian indulgence, to show that the serpent penetrated these Gardens of Eden, that every *Looking Backward* was potential with *1984*, that Julian West would never have been allowed to retain his Bostonian memories, and would have had to learn how to misperceive the present as the price for his survival. The characters in *1984* were indeed colourless individuals, almost complete ciphers, with a few childhood memories to rescue their individuality, and a tawdry sexuality with which to titillate themselves. The deviationist rebellious impulse in Winston Smith was largely unexplained by Orwell, while the character of O'Brien, the political inquisitor—an amalgam of a Torquemada, an Azeff and a Pavlov—the priest, provocateur, and behaviourist psychologist—is like a concoction for a B grade horror film. Not in *1984* is there that richness of personal nuance that Koestler brought to the character of the old Bolshevik, Rubashov; lacking is a hint of a reality beyond politics and sexuality that echoed in the prisoner's self-challenge: " And what about the infinite, Rubashov? " Yet Orwell had spoken to the lowest common denominator in all men, upsetting the unstable core in Marxist revolutionary personalities and the societies that are their mirror-image. In this sense, Orwell became the protagonist of " the spirit of Man," that would eventually defeat the totalitarian socialist order.

Remarkably, Orwell's was the first post-Freudian analysis of the totalitarian society, the first to confront the problem as to how such a society would deal with the accumulating, festering, aggressive resentments of its members. Long ago the American philosopher, William James, feared the dullness of the socialist equilibrium, and Freud himself wondered if the aggressive instinct in men would pose an insoluble problem for a socialist universal society, endangering its psychological stability. Orwell generalized brilliantly from the function that the purges of the 1930s had fulfilled for equilibrating the Soviet totalitarian state. Without Trotsky to blame and hate, without the alleged Trotskyist, and Rightist, and Menshevik and Bukharinist spies and saboteurs to excoriate, the tried peasants and proletarians might have revolted. Every despotic state, from sixteenth-century Spain to the twentieth-century Soviet Union, has needed heretics and scapegoats to kill; they provide the safety valve for the overflowing, otherwise not containable, energies of aggression. As Philip II had his dungeons for torture in Madrid, and the burnings at the stake for Jews, Protestants and doubters, so the Soviet totalitarian keeps the frustrated hatreds of its people from reaching a critical point by allowing a collective release. And the Two Minutes' Hate Sessions that Orwell described, the Hate Week, and the Hate Song, the " continuous frenzy of hatred of foreign enemies and internal traitors," especially of Emmanuel Goldstein (presumably a Jew), author of *The Theory and Practice of Oligarchic Collectivism*, were a necessary orgiastic ritual for the communist state of Oceania. A directed collective hatred is

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

required to maintain the social solidarity of a communist order. Aldous Huxley remarked that Orwell's *1984* was far more brutal than his own *Brave New World.*[3] When Huxley wrote his book, several years before the Moscow Trials, the trajectory of the totalitarian society was still far from clear. Orwell's *1984* appeared when liberal hopes in the Soviet Union foundered after the Second World War; although the threat of Hitler's Nazis was removed, and the " foreign encirclement " broken, Soviet society failed to develop in a liberal direction. Certainly the Democratic administration of President Harry Truman and the Labour government of Prime Minister Clement Attlee were no expansionist, " counter-revolutionary " threats to the Soviet Union. Nonetheless, the Soviet totalitarian state grew even more rigid and repressive than it had been before the war, as an intensive Hate America campaign was launched, with such Soviet dramatic works staged as *The Mad Haberdasher*, a play about President Truman; an extensive campaign, beginning with the execution of their cultural leaders, was also launched against the Jews. Aldous Huxley could write with a levity, even gaiety, that was not possible for Orwell writing in 1949. Understandably there is no humour in *1984*; in the Soviet state, many a humourist went to a Siberian labour camp for telling a joke about Stalin.[4]

ORWELL'S *1984*, in many ways, transcribes into fiction James Burnham's *The Managerial Revolution*, the only American book since Veblen's *Theory of the Leisure Class* deeply to have affected American social thinking. The Inner Party in *1984* is the central managerial corps, and the international scene of the three competing oligarchical states, Oceania, Eurasia and Eastasia, is close to the world order that Burnham foresaw for the post-war era. Orwell, however, feared that even Burnham had succumbed to the intellectual's temptation to admire cruelty, dishonesty and power as the necessary traits of a great man (e.g. Stalin).

Orwell was, indeed, the most penetrating and unrelenting critic of the psychology of the Western intellectual class in the twentieth century. It cost Orwell whatever popularity he might have acquired among Left intellectuals in Britain. In 1961, the Labour members of the British parliament were asked to name the writers who had been among their formative influences; not a single one of the 28 left-wing members mentioned Orwell.[5] Orwell became unpopular because he was actually the first English intellectual to assail the weakness of character of his fellow intellectuals. It was a familiar enough theme on the continent;

[3] Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World Revisited* (New York, 1958, rep. 1960), p. 2.

[4] A Soviet physicist told me that the great theorist at Moscow, Lev Landau, happened to make a mathematical mistake on the blackboard while lecturing to his class; unable to locate his error, he turned to his students, and said laughingly: " Q.E.D., socialism in one country is impossible." The next day he was arrested, then sentenced to prison as a Trotskyist spy. An editor of the *Soviet Literary Encyclopaedia* told me he similarly spent several years in prison (and was tortured) because he had told a joke about Stalin to a fellow student.

[5] K. W. J. Alexander and Alexander Hobbs, " What Influences Labour M.P.s? ", *New Society*, Vol. I, No. 11, December, 1962, pp. 11–14.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Georges Sorel, Vilfredo Pareto and Robert Michels had explored it powerfully. But in England, apart from Winston Churchill's singeing diatribes against the intellectuals who always hated their own country, the social type was rather exempted from criticism; indeed, a leading English philosopher in the *New Statesman and Nation* even denied that Britain had intellectuals in the sense in which France did.

Orwell, on the other hand, placed the intellectuals in the dock: " nearly every modern intellectual has gone over to some form or other of totalitarianism," he wrote.[6] " It was only after the Soviet régime became unmistakably totalitarian that English intellectuals, in large numbers, began to show an interest in it."[7] He thought they had been weak-spirited, flaccid, lacking in courage during the Second World War: " The English intelligentsia, on the whole, were more defeatist than the mass of the people—and some of them went on being defeatist at a time when the war was plainly won . . ."[8] He wrote savagely of the intellectuals, both those of middle- and working-class origins. " Who, calling himself an ' intellectual,' would dare not to laugh at it? The typical Socialist . . . is either a youthful snob Bolshevik who in five years' time will quite probably have made a wealthy marriage . . . or, . . . a prim little man, often with vegetarian leanings, . . ." He noted the " prevalence of cranks whenever Socialists are gathered together . . . every fruit-juice drinker, nudist, sandal-wearer, sex maniac, Quaker, ' Nature Cure ' quack, pacifist and feminist in England." It was the fixated disaffection of such intellectuals that made them prone " to side with any country hostile to Britain." He wrote in 1941 that " there is now no intelligentsia that is not in some sense ' Left,' " that their attitude was " generally negative, querulous," completely lacking in any constructive suggestion, and severed from the common culture of their country. " All through the critical years many left-wingers were chipping away at English morale; " " ashamed of their own nationality," they were sometimes " violently pro-Russian." According to Orwell, the intellectuals, we might say, are the most " treason-prone " of any social class, stratum or type. He even charged in 1946 that " subjectively, a majority of Americans would prefer either Russia or Germany to Britain."

Why, however, are the intellectuals so vulnerable to the totalitarian serpent? Despite all the searching pages that Orwell gave to this question, beginning with a whole chapter in *The Road to Wigan Pier*, he doubtless realized that he had failed to find the answer. He finally thought that " the underlying motive of many Socialists . . . is simply a hypertrophied sense of order," a repugnance to the untidiness of the bourgeois, competitive society. But it was precisely the sense of an absence of controls in the capitalist profit-seeking economy that had been prized by Franklin, Defoe, Fielding, even though it depressed the solipsistic Bishop Ber-

[6] Orwell, *Dickens, Dali and Others*, p. 73.
[7] *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell*, Vol. IV, p. 212.
[8] Ibid. p. 206.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

keley. And Orwell's own route to socialism had been by way of a quite different motive—the expiation of guilt:

> I was in the Indian Police five years, . . . For five years I had been part of an oppressive system, and it had left me with a bad conscience. Innumerable remembered faces— . . . of men waiting in the condemned cells, of subordinates I had bullied and aged peasants I had snubbed, of servants and coolies I had hit with my fist in moments of rage (nearly everyone does these things in the East, . . .) haunted me intolerably. I was conscious of an immense weight of guilt that I had to expiate . . . I wanted to submerge myself, to get right down among the oppressed, to be one of them and on their side against their tyrants . . . I now realised there was no need to go as far as Burma to find tyranny and exploitation. Here in England, down under one's feet, were the submerged working class, . . .[9]

TO the many Marxist intellectuals, moved too by the desire to expiate guilt, what would have been the underlying emotive appeal of the " dictatorship of the proletariat "? It was precisely a society in which bourgeois intellectuals like themselves could expiate guilt, accept flagellation, experience martyrdom. Russian intellectuals were permeated with the guilt-masochistic ethic of the back-to-the-people movement, and with a similar doctrine of Tolstoy and Kropotkin, long before their successors succumbed to the Bolshevik Party dictatorship. The guilt of the intellectual, illusory though it may be, leads him to seek a redemptive mission to justify himself. The non-intellectual has little of such experience; thousands of British and French colonial officials were quite pleased with their roles in Asia and Africa, and many Burmese, Africans and Hindus, pondering the millions who have been massacred during the decades of their independence, might look back on the relatively benevolent era of Western imperialist rule. Orwell himself, as he recovered from his sense of guilt, blamed " the general weakening of imperialism " partly upon the work of the left-wing intellectuals, and partly on the London bureaucrats who stifled the initiative of young would-be imperialists who had spirit and ideas.[10] In any case, few among the Western imperialists experienced guilt, and then sought a compensatory socialist mission, as did George Orwell. From this point of view, *1984*, as a socialist Gothic novel, envisages the ordeal that the intellectuals undergo in humiliation and degradation as they expiate the still greater guilt of having collaborated with the totalitarians.

Moreover, according to Orwell, the managerial intellectual class, broadly embracing the " scientists, technicians, teachers, journalists, broadcasters, bureaucrats, professional politicians," also nourishes a longing for " more power and prestige." Therefore, it harbours a " secret wish: the wish to destroy the old equalitarian version of Socialism and usher in a hierarchical society where the intellectual can at last get his

[9] *The Road to Wigan Pier*, pp. 124–128.
[10] *Inside the Whale and Other Essays*, p. 84.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

hands on the whip."[11] Though he criticized James Burnham's political time-chart for yielding to " the instinct to bow down before the conqueror of the moment, to accept the existing trend as irreversible," the horror of *1984* is that it sketches a society with all the built-in sociological gadgetry for maintaining its equilibrium. The gloom in *1984* emanates from the inevitable degradation of the modern hero-class, as its character impels it to a totalitarian " choice "; the character of intellectuals is their fate.

What the sources are of the intellectuals' high potential sense of guilt remains, however, an unsolved problem. Orwell was never able to isolate the socio-pathogenic virus that disabled the English intellectual class, making it, in his view, the agent of decadence in modern history. One can imagine how Orwell could have satirized the American intellectuals during the Vietnam War communing in their hate-sessions for America, and rendering symbolic obeisance before the communist chieftains in North Vietnam and Cambodia. Who knows? Does the cultural leisure that society grants intellectuals fill them with the feeling that since they have lived as parasites, they must redeem themselves especially before those whose toil has sustained them in cultured comfort? Perhaps they therefore require a mission, a task, to vindicate themselves by serving as society's " critical conscience "; they then make the highest sacrifice, that of their own intelligence, to wallow in what has been called " holy stupidity."

Orwell, a populist socialist himself to the last, retained an unswerving faith in the common man, the working class; in *1984* the abiding hope that the oligarchical collectivism would founder resides in the " proles," the proletarians, who go their own way, and " being without general ideas . . . could only focus on petty specific grievances." As Lenin too had long ago observed, the workers were relatively impervious to ideology; they disbelieved the pronouncements of Big Brother and the Inner Party. Evidently, however, the " proles " (like the Soviet workingmen) would remain passive unless a breakdown of the socialist economy propelled them to overthrow the system. How staunch would their democratic faith be? In his disgust with his fellow-intellectuals, Orwell probably over-idealized the virtue of the workingmen. No one can live, however, with the outlook of perpetual hopelessness in *1984*'s prospect, and Orwell keeps a last residual faith in the common sense of the lowly and long maltreated. He longed for a kind of guild socialist world, decentralized and democratic, much like the one that his anarchist friend, George Woodcock, advocated.

DID the social diagram of *1984* afford Orwell any ground for hope whatsoever? To maintain his revolutionary faith, the defeated Trotsky had struggled to believe that the working class would rise up to overthrow the rule of Stalin, that maker of Thermidorian counter-revolution, like the one that destroyed Robespierre. But in Orwell's view,

[11] *Collected Essays*, p. 212.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the Bolshevik revolution was one that had never had a Thermidor, and moreover, that need not necessarily ever have one. Unlike the French revolutionaries who had finally indicted the Robespierrean " drinkers of blood," repealed the economic constraints, and dissolved the Jacobin club, the Soviet Communist Party remained dominantly embedded in the social structure; its centralized hierarchical apparatus directed the economy, and virtually the whole KGB political police went unpunished for its crimes. *1984* was a world that set at naught the remnant of a dream to which revolutionary Marxists clung. No materialistic dialectic, no Marxist *deus ex machina* would intervene to transform totalitarian tyranny into a higher qualitative freedom. This was a world without hope.

What is most baffling in Orwell is that he is a political philosopher without a philosophy. He stands for justice, liberty and, above all, honesty. But on what grounds does he advocate loyalty to these few simple ideas, as Conrad once called them? Is it because they make for the greatest happiness of the greatest number? Or are they mandated by a Kantian categorical imperative? Are they part of the moral law that is grounded in that part of man's nature that he shares with God? Orwell had no interest whatsoever in philosophy; philosophers' discussions repelled him. A year before he died, he read a passage in Russell's most recent book, and commented, " I can never follow that kind of thing. It is the sort of thing that makes me feel that philosophy should be forbidden by law."[12] Like an English Lockean, Orwell mostly seems to have felt no metaphysical hunger. His faith in man, with his sense of right and wrong, sufficed; he accepted the British moral sense as valid without concern for its origin. Was Orwell then simply a kind of naturalistic secular humanist? If so, one must observe that for several years he attended church services, and asked to be buried according to the rites of the Church of England. Was he then what he called in *A Clergyman's Daughter* an " Anglican Atheist "? Evidently, secularism did not altogether satisfy him; his strong sense of duty suggests a religious ingredient. Would the miserable record of the intellectuals and proletarians alike in abetting the rise of the totalitarians have afforded a ground for faith in the spirit of man, unless it were inherently covalent with a divine power? Orwell, however, in keeping with the English philosophical culture, repressed the mention of matters religious, though he cared not at all for the philosophizing that aimed to confute the religious standpoint. " Faith vanishes, but the need for faith remains the same as before," Orwell wrote.

This over-disciplined factualism perhaps made Orwell less sensitive to those free-ranging, adventurous, original ingredients in men that are buffers to the totalitarian pressures. No more than the individual can be ablated into a Hegelian Absolute can he be subsumed to the formulae of totalitarian conditioning. Though Winston Smith, the revolutionist against the revolutionary regime, becomes Orwell's protagonist, Orwell disliked such writers as Bernard Shaw who linked man with an underlying

[12] *The Collected Essays*, Vol. IV, p. 539.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Life-Force, and was, at one time, even displeased with Joseph Conrad, whose Lord Jim confessed to a faith higher than the laws of order and progress. His secularist standpoint may have contributed to lapses as a literary critic. Apart from " one or two early novels and one or two criticisms," Shaw's " only function," according to Orwell, was " to console fat women who yearn to be highbrows," while Conrad's *Lord Jim*, in his view, was " an absurdity as a whole."[13] He found something " un-English " in " Conrad's romanticism . . . the lonely Prometheus struggling against fate . . ."[14] Yet Winston Smith, Lemuel Gulliver and Robinson Crusoe all shared in this trait; it is the human surd that defies the totalitarian solution.

In his quest for rationality, Orwell, like so many Englishmen—Shaw, Webb, Wells, Russell—tended to belittle the importance of anti-semitism. As far as Orwell could see, " anti-semitism is only one manifestation of nationalism," that can be cured only when the larger disease of nationalism is cured.[15] Long before nationalism, however, became a historic force, in mediaeval Europe, anti-semitism was endemic, and always its worst manifestations were linked first to the relative defencelessness of the Jews, and second, to the sense, as Charles de Gaulle put it, that the Jews were an élite people, gifted inordinately with intellectual abilities. Anti-semitism has thus always been a concomitant of anti-intellectual and populist movements. And anti-Zionism, as the current form of anti-semitism, aims precisely to restore the Jews to such a state of defencelessness.

THERE are those who have argued that *1984* has shown that the totalitarian potential, or even inevitability, is inherent in every scientific civilization. If by the " scientific " standpoint, we mean the unfettered experimental and theoretical inquiry into natural phenomena, then quite clearly every totalitarian political system has been anti-scientific. Nor is the totalitarian state the product of our modern technological devices and the urban society. It is overlooked that pre-scientific societies have been among the more destructive of individual freedom; the mutual surveillance that obtained even in a New England theocratic village was on a scale that far exceeded what our auditory and visual gadgetry makes possible; you needed no technical device for espionage if everybody knew what everyone else was doing, and whom they were constantly seeing. All along the postal routes everybody knew about it when Thomas Jefferson and John Adams exchanged letters, and Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge* reminds us how the small village could stamp out the individual's freedom. Modern technology has probably multiplied more interstices for freedom than have ever previously existed.

It is the totalitarian streak, the animal cruelty in man, masquerading

[13] *The Collected Essays*, Vol. I, p. 143, Vol. III, p. 440.
[14] *The Collected Essays*, Vol. III, p. 389.
[15] Ibid. pp. 340–341.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

itself in all sorts of ideological finery, that is rather the source of the kind of world against which Orwell warns us. Stark, forbidding, its lines always black and white, and the rich colours of good cheer censored and removed, and depicting a society in which every room smacks of the dungeon, *1984* is the most powerful political morality play ever written. Arthur Koestler in *Darkness at Noon* still allowed himself a moment's foretaste of a happier world; the Party interrogator tells " Comrade " Rubashov that someday the Party archives will be opened, and people will learn the truth, and remember his services to the revolution. *1984*'s Oceania, however, has no archives, no truth to remember; truth vanished down the Memory Hole, and man regressing has lost both his past and future, to live in a dismal, specious present. With *1984* the Utopian tradition perished. Never again will sane civilized people quite believe the promises of socialist satisfaction; never again will they quite believe the " *Newspeak* " of dialectic. Here is the future which you are making for yourselves, said Orwell. Bestir yourselves if it's not the world you want.

Orwell was much impressed with the argument of the economist Friedrich Hayek that collectivism necessarily leads to " concentration camps, leader worship, and war." Nevertheless, the trend to collectivism, as a way of resolving unemployment, seemed to him irresistible. The outlook was therefore " depressing," with no way out " unless a planned economy can be somehow combined with the freedom of the intellect, which can only happen if the concept of right and wrong is restored to politics."[16] In other words, socialism would work only if a non-Marxist ethical miracle occurred. Did Orwell, author of the greatest anti-Utopia, still remain himself at the end a Utopian, an intellectual seeking a socialist transfiguration?

[16] *The Collected Essays*, Volume III, p. 144.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Will George Orwell Survive 1984?

Leopold Labedz

> " *When you lie, it's much to know you're lying.*"
> **George Orwell**
> " *It is a most encouraging thing to hear a human voice when fifty thousand gramophones are playing the same tune.*" **George Orwell**
> " *How fascinating to live long enough to meet one's own world as history, and find it barely recognisable!* " **Malcolm Muggeridge**

" ORWELLIAN Orgy . . . Orwellian Overkill . . . the Tedium of 1984"—these are just a few descriptions of the extraordinary explosion of articles, reports, plays, conferences and books on the occasion of the advent of the Orwellian year. As Paul Johnson put it in *The Spectator* (7 January 1984):

> The excesses of the Orwell industry became a kind of Orwellian nightmare in themselves. Big Brother, in the shape of Big Crick and other senior entrepreneurs in the industry, filled our TV screens, dominated the radio waves and overflowed the newspaper columns. . . . The Orwell industry will end by destroying Orwell's work. He has already been turned upside down and stood, as it were, on his short-back-and-sides head.

Orwell fever isn't always Big Business; sometimes it is cottage industry. The following small financial note appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* (16 November 1983):

> Six weeks to 1984, George Orwell's definitive biographer Prof. Crick yesterday predicted a solid 12 months of commercialization, on a scale approaching that of *Star Wars*.
>
> Everything from T-shirts to popcorn and stuffed toys, are dreaded by Crick, who tells me *1984* fever is sweeping the world " like the black plague."
>
> Crick, however, is not allowing the Orwellian bandwagon to pass him by: " to rip off the Yanks—or rather provide something responsible for the Americans," he is staging a five day " George Orwell Summer School " in London at up to £180 a ticket. Included is a curious music hall show at the Players Theatre of songs " mentioned in Orwell's work."
>
> This follows a tour of 20 *1984* conferences in America, starting in January, where I trust Crick's hosts will be more receptive than those in Brussels last weekend, *Les Amis de Science Fiction et Fantaisie*. He tells me few of the " freaks " turned up because they considered *1984* neither fiction nor fantasy.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Reading the unending stream of commentaries on Orwell and " his " year, it is indeed obvious that, more often than not, he has been misunderstood and generally trivialized, and his insights wilfully distorted. Irving Kristol rightly remarked in *The Wall Street Journal* (19 December 1983) that

> George Orwell must be slowly spinning in his grave. Throughout the Western world a substantial segment of the media and academia is gearing to " appreciate " his ideas in ways that would have confirmed his worst apprehensions.

What happened to Orwell can be precisely described as the application to himself of the mechanism of Orwellian inversion of meaning. Like Winston Smith, he became its innocent victim. More than that: not only have his perceptions been corrupted and perverted, but he has been adopted by some of the very people whose mentality and attitudes he despised most.

How did this operation, this Orwellian lobotomy on Orwell, come about?

Once upon a time (i.e. when Orwell was still alive) things were " normal." Orwell, democrat and libertarian, would criticize communism and the " progressive " intelligentsia. *The Daily Worker* would castigate him as a reactionary servant of imperialism, as its " running dog." The fellow-travellers considered him unclean; the editor of the *New Statesman*, Kingsley Martin, disapproved of him, and Orwell in turn despised Kingsley Martin.

> Once when he and I were lunching at a favourite Greek restaurant of his in Percy Street [Malcolm Muggeridge recalls], suddenly out of the blue he asked me to change places with him, which I of course agreed to do. He explained that the reason he wanted to change places was that from where he had been sitting, he found himself looking straight at Kingsley Martin lunching at a nearby table. The spectacle of so corrupt a face, he said, would assuredly spoil his luncheon. . . .
>
> *Sunday Telegraph*, 18 December 1983

As for attitudes to Orwell, they were clear-cut: from the Stalinist *Pravda* which described him as " a lackey of the bourgeoisie," to the " anti-Stalinist " Isaac Deutscher who described Orwell as a " fanatic " sowing the seeds of McCarthyism, and *1984* as the " ideological super-weapon in the cold war."

With the passing of time things became more complicated. The " era of the cult of personality " (an Orwellism if ever there was one) was denounced by Khrushchev, causing disarray among Western pro-Soviet men of the Left. While Stalin's victims were being " rehabilitated " in the Soviet Union (in an Orwellian way), Orwell, by then long since dead, was beginning to be " reassessed " by " progressives." Their appropriation and expropriation of Orwell began. He was by now already being called " a great teacher " in the *New Statesman* itself.

It seemed to presage a great puzzlement, and at that time (in *Survey*, October 1968) I referred to the " Orwellization " of Orwell:

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

How would George Orwell regard the general consensus which his writings evoke today? What would he think about some of his recent admirers? How would he view the present scene if he were alive?

There is no doubt, as *Time* magazine pointed out, that " today he would be equally unpopular." In his time he was made into a political pariah by the " progressive " *bien-pensants* for his lucid exposition of their cant and their " smelly little orthodoxies." Now, reading the reviews of *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell* makes one realise that, like so many others before him, he is safely on the way to emasculation through canonization (the actual ceremony will take place in 1984). Particularly striking is the change in the ostensible attitude towards him of the same " progressive " *bien-pensants* whose type of mentality he despised most and who displayed such marked antipathy towards him in the past. They snubbed him then, they embrace him now.

In fact, to entertain the idea that Orwell would have been pleased with the " progressive " intelligentsia of today would require a double "doublethink." The elderly subjects of Orwell's scorn are still with us: his unmasking of the humbug of the pacifist and fellow-travelling Old Left has not prevented the passing-on of some of its mental attitudes to the younger generation. Its shibboleths and pieties have crept into the spirit of the age. One has only to contrast the refreshing, cant-proof individual style of Orwell with the thoughtless imitativeness, the sanctimonious " revolutionary " clichés, and the stereotyped " nonconformism " of the New Left.

Twenty-eight years ago [in 1940] Orwell wrote: " The thing that frightens me about the modern intelligentsia is their inability to see that human society must be based on common decency, whatever the political and economic forms may be." In 1948 he wrote in his essay *Writers and Leviathan*: " Obviously, for about fifteen years past, the dominant orthodoxy, especially among the young, has been Left. The key words are: progressive, democratic and revolutionary, while the labels which you must at all costs avoid having gummed upon you are bourgeois, reactionary and Fascist."

What has changed? How, and why?

The Case Of Raymond Williams, Or Going Doublethink One Better

In the 1970s the " recovery " of Orwell by the " progressives " advanced substantially. Raymond Williams published a book on Orwell in the Fontana *Modern Masters* series (1970) in which he " reinterpreted " Orwell in a way which actually made him a precursor of the New Left. This ideological surgery was performed by using very selective quotations and leaving aside what was obviously essential in the evolution of Orwell's thought. According to Raymond Williams, Orwell's " anticipations of *1984* are primarily responses to fascism." He contends that " long after his controversies with what he saw as the official lying of the Communist press, it was still fascism that he saw as the totalitarian danger. . . ." The sophistry of this " reinterpretation " consists in avoiding Orwell's preoccupation with the concept of totalitarianism which led

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

him (unlike Raymond Williams) to see not only the historical differences between Nazism and communism, but also the real similarities between the two. Williams' pious diagnosis of Orwell as " a complex man " even manages to exclude some of his most characteristic concerns—for example the tendency of the " progressive " intelligentsia to be single-minded while holding fast to incompatible ideas; to doublethink. This, of course, is more than understandable since Raymond Williams belongs to the species himself.

On one split level of thought Rayond Williams must know perfectly well that after the defeat of the Axis powers in 1945 it was *not* " still fascism that [Orwell] saw as a totalitarian danger," but communism, and that the novel *1984* is *not* " primarily a response to fascism." Elsewhere in his book, he says so himself; but evidently he has a deep need to explain away the main thrust of *Animal Farm* and of *1984*. He attempts to dilute Orwell's concern with communism and criticizes him at the same time for " cutting out the spring of hope " by creating in the novel " the conditions for defeat and despair . . . the revival of the Socialist movement, which [Orwell] said he wanted, is met by the sad ghost of his late imagination." At one point Williams admits that " in understanding his last work . . . the key element . . . was the substitution of Communism for fascism as the totalitarian threat," and thus explicitly contradicts himself.

He even concedes that " there is a clear line, certainly, from Orwell's *Inside the Whale* and *Nineteen Eighty-Four* to an orthodox North Altantic mood "; but he also confers " Orwell's effective inheritance " on the New Left which " respected Orwell directly, especially in its early years." What happened, then, in later years? Down the memory hole?

Williams points out Orwell's contradictions, but why does he curiously refuse to look at " these different tendencies " as part of Orwell's political evolution? He admits that " there are phases of Orwell's development "—but this obvious observation is given a very special twist:

> Evidence for each of the positions can be drawn from each of the periods, though of course with differences of emphasis.

This turns into a remarkable exercise in sophistry in which one stresses only what it is convenient to emphasize. In order to protect the faith from doubts and doubters, Williams looks at Orwell not as shedding various illusions over time, but as maintaining contradictory positions, only " with differences of emphasis."

Thus, even before the likeness of Orwell was officially made into a wax figure in Madame Tussaud's gallery, Williams exhibits him as being permanently fixed in a state of doublethink (" the power of holding two contradictory beliefs in one's mind simultaneously, and accepting both of them "). This ideological " one-upmanship," amounting to " treblethink," is given a spurious air of ideological detachment:

> It would be easy but pointless to start a quarrel over Orwell's inheritance: body snatching or mantle snatching. . . . Instead of

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> flattening out contradictions by choosing this or that tendency as the " real Orwell," or fragmenting them by separating this or that period or this or that genre, we ought to say that it is the paradoxes which are finally significant.

One can almost sympathize with Raymond Williams' difficulty. Unlike him, Orwell was not " a true believer "; he had the audacity to learn from experience. His intellectual history is the history of his gradual emancipation from the fog of " progressive " attitudes and stereotypes, although he died before he had quite shed them all.

ORWELL was never a communist, but his evolution was not dissimilar to that of the prominent ex-communists of the era: Boris Souvarine, Ignazio Silone, Franz Borkenau, Manès Sperber, Arthur Koestler, Bertram D. Wolfe. In his short life he moved from the mental horizons of a Kingsley Martin *milieu* to the intellectual world of a Koestler (who was similarly ostracized by " progressive " circles).

Williams regrets that " in [Orwell's] criticism of people who went on holding or who came to hold positions identical or close to his own between 1937 and 1939, there is some lively polemic, but also a good deal of rancour or random abuse." He does not seem to want to understand the basic reason why Orwell, having gone through the " lively" ideological historical experience of the late 1930s, abandoned these positions, and nowhere does he quote or refer to a basic conclusion of " the real Orwell ":

> The sin of nearly all left-wingers from 1933 onward is that they have wanted to be anti-fascist without being anti-totalitarian.

For the lesson Orwell learned on his return from Catalonia was that defence of political liberties had to be consistent, alert to tyrannous militant tendencies on both Left and Right; that freedom was indivisible, and that false friends behind the lines could purge you as quickly as open enemies on the front.

Orwell was a left-winger, but he always resolutely rejected communism and I have little doubt that, were he alive, he would be branded today as " a vulgar anti-communist " and, even worse, " a cold warrior." His political opposition to communism was firmly based on ethical grounds: he insisted that " all people who are morally sound have known since about 1931 that the Russian régime stinks." Intellectually, communism was for him " a form of Socialism that makes mental honesty impossible."

He made his position particularly clear in his attack on W. H. Auden's notorious notion of " the necessary murder " (in *Inside the Whale*, 1940):

> Personally I would not speak so lightly of murder. It so happens that I have seen the bodies of numbers of murdered men—I don't mean killed in battle, I mean murdered. Therefore I have some conception of what murder means—the terror, the hatred, the howling relatives, the post mortems, the blood, the smells. To me, murder is something to be avoided. So it is to any ordinary person. The Hitlers and Stalins

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> find murder necessary, but they don't advertise their callousness, and they don't speak of it as murder; it is " liquidation," " elimination " or some such soothing phrase. . . . The huge tribe known as " the right Left people " found it easy to condone the purge-and-*OGPU* side of the Russian régime and the horrors of the first Five-Year Plan.

Intellectually, Orwell was no less emphatic in his condemnation of communist practices and of those who justify them:

> Fifteen years ago, when one defended the freedom of the intellect, one had to defend it against Conservatives, against Catholics, and to some extent—for they were not of great importance in England—against Fascists. Today one has to defend it against Communists and " fellow-travellers." One ought not to exaggerate the direct influence of the small English Communist Party, but there can be no question about the poisonous effect of the Russian *mythos* on English intellectual life. Because of it, known facts are suppressed and distorted to such an extent as to make it doubtful whether a true history of our times can ever be written.
>
> Let me give just one instance out of the hundreds that could be cited. When Germany collapsed, it was found that very large numbers of Soviet Russians—mostly, no doubt, from non-political motives—had changed sides and were fighting for the Germans. Also, a small but not negligible proportion of the Russian prisoners and Displaced Persons refused to go back to the U.S.S.R., and some of them, at least, were repatriated against their will. These facts, known to many journalists on the spot, went almost unmentioned in the British press, while at the same time russophile publicists in England continued to justify the purges and deportation of 1936–8 by claiming that the U.S.S.R. " had no quislings." The fog of lies and misinformation that surrounds such subjects as the Ukraine famine, the Spanish Civil War, Russian policy in Poland, and so forth, is not due entirely to conscious dishonesty, but any writer or journalist who is fully sympathetic to the U.S.S.R.—sympathetic, that is, in the way the Russians themselves would want him to be—does have to acquiesce in deliberate falsification on important issues. . . .
>
> *Collected Essays*, Vol. 4, pp. 84–85

Orwell And The " right Left people "

Not that George Orwell was always that consistent. But, unlike other men of the Left, his intellectual integrity impelled him not to indulge in tortuous rationalizations, to face refractory realities, to call a spade a spade, rather than engage in the usual face- and faith-saving euphemisms and semantic acrobatics. In the process, " the crystal spirit " which Orwell invoked early on (in a short poem written in 1939) clarified his own mind and those of many other people. Inevitably, this entailed eliminating various contradictory beliefs of his own. Between 1937 and 1939 Orwell was, no doubt about it, involved in a bit of " doublethink " himself.

The best example is perhaps his attitude in the late 1930s to the international question of War and Foreign Policy. In the period between

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

his return from Spain and the outbreak of the Second World War, Orwell belonged to both the pacifist Peace Pledge Union and the ILP (the splintered Independent Labour Party) which advocated " a revolutionary war." At a time when the official Labour Party was advocating " resistance to the dictators " but opposing rearmament, he expressed the following ideas:

31 July 1937: " It is evident that people can be deceived by the anti-Fascist stuff exactly as they were deceived by the gallant little Belgium stuff, and when war comes they will walk straight into it. I don't, however, agree with the pacifist attitude. . . . I still think that one must fight for Socialism against Fascism. I mean fight physically with weapons. . . ."

28 August 1937: " War against a foreign country only happens when the moneyed classes think they are going to profit from it. . . . Every war when it comes, or before it comes, is represented not as war but as an act of self-defence against a homicidal maniac (' militarist ' Germany in 1914, ' Fascist ' Germany next year or the year after). The essential job is to get people to recognise war propaganda when they see it, especially when it is disguised as peace propaganda."

15 September 1937: " Everyone with any imagination can forsee that Fascism, not of course called Fascism, will be imposed on us as soon as the war starts. . . . If one collaborates with a capitalist-imperialist government in a struggle ' against Fascism', i.e. against rival imperialism, one is simply letting Fascism in by the back door."

5 February 1938: " If someone drops a bomb on your mother, go and drop two bombs on his mother. The only apparent alternatives are to smash dwelling houses to powder, blow out human entrails and burn holes in children with lumps of thermite, or to be enslaved by people who are oddly more ready to do these things than you are yourself; as yet no one has suggested a practicable way out."

26 May 1938: " Pacifism is so far from being fashionable, or acceptable to the possessing class, that all the big daily newspapers unite to boycott all news of pacifist activities. . . . Meanwhile there is considerable possibility of producing an effective anti-war movement in England. It is a question of mobilizing the dislike of war that undoubtedly exists in ordinary decent people, as opposed to the hack journalists and the pansy left."

12 October 1938: " The policy of simultaneously shouting for a war policy and pretending to denounce conscription, rearmament etc. is utter nonsense and the general public aren't such bloody fools as not to see it."

4 January 1939: ". . . that Britain and France ought to have gone to war [to defend the Czechs] . . . I don't believe to be true."

Once the war started, however, Orwell cleared his mind.

10 January 1940: " It seems to me that now we are in this bloody war we have got to win it and I would like to lend a hand."

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

8 June 1940: " Since 1934 I have known war between England and Germany was coming, and since 1936 I have known it with complete certainty. I could feel it in my belly, and the chatter of the pacifists on the one hand and of the Popular Front people who pretended to fear that Britain was preparing for war against Russia on the other, never deceived me."

12 July 1942: " In so far as it takes effect at all, pacifist propaganda can only be effective *against* those countries where a certain amount of freedom of speech is still permitted; in other words it is helpful to totalitarianism. . . . Despotic governments can stand ' moral force ' till the cows come home; what they fear is physical force."

This is not exactly a tale full of consistency. But it shows Orwell's characteristic evolution. His common sense told him, increasingly, as his subsequent positions demonstrated, to abandon confused ideological clichés cherished by the Left and make responsible choices by looking steadily at realities in the light of experience.

THE path Orwell traversed can be gauged by one dramatic comparison. Here is what he said in his article " Why I Joined the Independent Labour Party," in *The New Leader* (24 June 1938):

> We know the terrible temptation of the present moment—the temptation to fling every principle overboard in order to prepare for an imperialist war. . . . I believe that the ILP is the only party which, as a party, is likely to take the right line against imperialist war or against Fascism when this appears in its British form . . . the only party I could join with at least the certainty that I would never be led up the garden path in the name of capitalist democracy.

And here is what Orwell said in his " Notes on Nationalism " (*Polemic*, No. 1, October 1945):

> There is a minority of intellectual pacifists whose real though unadmitted motive appears to be hatred of western democracy and admiration for totalitarianism. Pacifist propaganda usually boils down to saying that one side is as bad as the other, but if one looks closely at the writings of the younger intellectual pacifists, one finds that they do not by any means express impartial disapproval but are directed almost entirely against Britain and the United States. Moreover they do not as a rule condemn violence as such, but only violence used in the defence of the Western countries. The Russians, unlike the British, are not blamed for defending themselves by warlike means. . . .

It is not surprising that Raymond Williams does not dwell on such points; but fudging them is not always possible. The deep, ill-concealed hostility to " the real Orwell " often surfaces in ideological censure. Having earlier praised Orwell as " a generous, inquiring, truthful man," Williams then charges him with having made " an accommodation to capitalism ";

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and wearily concludes that " the thing to do with his work, his history, is to read it, not imitate it."

In an additional chapter, " *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in 1984," recently written for the new edition of his book (1984), Williams condemned what he calls " the use and abuse of the novel during the cold war." He also reproached Orwell for the " error " of excluding from the novel " the national liberation and revolutionary movements of what he knew as the colonial world." In his article in the communist *Morning Star* (3 January 1984)[1] he made his point even more explicit, arguing in tortuous prose that the fact that Orwell's vision

> has been at least partly verified . . . including within Socialism and the labour movement, cannot outweigh the more important cancellation of all significant political struggles and hopes.
>
> But this was the cancellation that was steadily worked for, in the period from the Cold War—the (Communist) God that failed—through the propagation of the End of Ideology to the so-called New Philosophers who see the struggle for freedom as opening the door to tyranny.

It is not difficult to see the cat slipping out of the bag. Williams' attitude here is, unmistakably, the very opposite of Orwell's. Sidney Hook once wrote ironically about people " who always tried to keep in delicate balance their appreciation of both totalitarianism and democracy." Williams clearly tips even this " delicate balance." But after all, he comes to praise Orwell, not to bury him.

In his book Williams displays a kind of fearful symmetrism, so characteristic of the " progressive " intelligentsia.[2] Almost all his examples of Orwellisms, from " doublethink " through " *Newspeak* " to " the memory hole," refer to what he sees as their manifestations in the West, while references to Soviet and communist practices are shrouded in "delicate " obfuscation. The crime of the Western " oligarchy " resides in

> identifying as public enemies, in its newspapers, dissenting political figures: not the " proper official Opposition," but the " unofficial " Reds, Wreckers, Extremists who in good *1984* style are seen as either mad or guilty of " thoughtcrime."

By contrast, Williams' comments on communist practices are full of polite, cautious restraint. He writes about " socialist order which under long historical pressures had become authoritarian." He magnanimously admits—*quelle finesse de sentiments*!—that " reservations could be made about the nature of Soviet communism," but refers to its all-embracing falsehoods as " official simplifications." He sedulously avoids mention-

[1] Excerpts from Raymond Williams' chapter on " *Nineteen Eighty-Four* in 1984 " appeared simultaneously in the " Euro-Communist " *Marxism Today* (January 1984), which is at loggerheads with the pro-Soviet *Morning Star*.

[2] Koestler described this form of *trahison des clercs* as follows:

> It showed a forgiving attitude towards totalitarian terror, but denounced with unforgiving venom any failing or injustice in the West (*The Yogi and the Commissar*, 1945).

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ing the crimes: the omnipresent systematic lying from the Moscow Trials to the nasty little war in Afghanistan; the Gulag slave-labour camps, the psychiatric prisons; the persecution of writers, artists, religious and national minorities; the subjection of countries to satellite status; the ugly militarization of society combined with hypocritical " peace " propaganda; and all the rest of the temporary deviations from shining ideals for the radiant future. His rare references to such unpleasantnesses are indirect and euphemistic: he certainly is no follower of unflinching Orwellian realism when it comes to *Soviet* affairs.[3] The net result is a complete travesty of Orwell in this pathetic attempt at " reinterpretation."

Emasculation Through Canonization

Although the " official " biography of Orwell by Bernard Crick (Secker & Warburg 1980)[4] does not suffer from the same excesses as the Williams book, it has also contributed to the misinterpretation of Orwell and to his false " new image." It is certainly a more solid and professional piece of work; but Crick's " progressive " mentality is so different from Orwell's that he had somehow to rationalize the divergence of his attitudes from those of his subject, who was the scourge of the *bien-pensants* of his day. He accordingly invented the concept of " empathetic fallacy " in order to refashion his "hero." The end result is rather more subtle than in the case of Williams' " reinterpretation," but is none the less problematical. Edward Crankshaw rightly pointed out in his *Times Literary Supplement* review (26 December 1980) that while Orwell's life history is conscientiously recorded and extolled, Crick's Orwell is devoid of all his essential human characteristics.

> Because Professor Crick is so bent on avoiding what he calls the " empathetic fallacy," he has devised a method of exposition, a sort of laboratory demonstrator's method, unfit for application to any organism more complex than a newt. . . . There is no shape, no light, no shade. . . . Above all what is lacking from beginning to end of this book is life and warmth.

Still, many reviewers " approved " the biography, and not a few were

[3] Without invoking the " economic interpretation," one might say that Williams has invested too much in Utopia to be able to renounce it emotionally after its bankruptcy has become intellectually obvious. As the reviewer of his latest book, *Towards 2000* (1983), remarked in *The London Review of Books* (2–15 February 1984): " Williams does not know where to stand: the book is the tragedy of a man who can't any longer make up his mind."

[4] Bernard Crick expressed his thanks to " the late Mrs Sonia Orwell who in 1972 granted me unrestricted access to all of George Orwell's papers," but he stressed that " in no sense is this an official biography." What he did not mention in his " Acknowledgements " was the fact—revealed by Julian Symons—that, having invited Bernard Crick to write Orwell's biography, Sonia Orwell (for reasons which are not made explicit) " later tried vainly to retract " the invitation (*The Times Literary Supplement*, 27 January 1984). Afterwards Crick disclosed that Sonia Orwell was " breathing down my neck with a deadline on a contract which would have removed my absolute right to quote and say what I pleased—a deadline that by the end she was hoping, almost predictably, I would not meet " (*The Times Higher Education Supplement*, 20 April 1984).

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

highly complimentary.[5] The book certainly helped to prepare the ground for subsequent attempts at the " Orwellization " of Orwell.

It was when 1984 itself was approaching that the " emasculation through canonization " of Orwell finally occurred. This is not, of course, to say that there weren't many highly perceptive and intelligent articles and essays on Orwell, but many were so thoroughly misconceived that the public was left with an even greater disorientation than before. Or, as General Jaruzelski's *Trybuna Ludu* (28–29 January 1984) put it:

> For over 30 years the anti-communist propagandists tried in every way to identify Orwell's novel (*1984*) with the reality of the USSR and other socialist countries. Today, however, this is not so easy for them as at the height of the cold war. In 1984 the arch-conservative politicians, the spokesmen of Big Capital and the anti-communist crusaders in the USA have to conduct polemics with the opinions of other well-known Americans—the activists for Human Rights, Racial Equality, and Peace who are comparing the realities of the United States with the Orwellian vision of "*Big Brother is Watching You*." Similar voices were widespread in West Germany, Great Britain, and the Scandinavian countries.

If one disregards the Orwellian character of this passage, its second part refers to something that has actually happened, and indeed reached an astonishing degree of intensity. The " widespread voices " not only confused the great issues and Orwell's attitude to them, their scale and persistence testified to a serious decline of common sense and sense of proportion in the West. They ranged from muddled assertions that *1984* was aimed both at the (totalitarian) East and at the (democratic) West to the brazen relocation of Orwell's target: not the USSR but the USA. The spectrum of this " reinterpretation " of Orwell ranged from, say, the minimum of $2 + 2 = 4\frac{1}{2}$ to the maximum of $2 + 2 = 5$. The final—lunatic—touch to this Pirandellesque situation was the triumphal reclamation of Orwell by the Soviet press.

AMERICAN writers were not without their own surrealistic touches. In the US symposium *1984 Revisited* (edited by Irving Howe), Marc Crispin Miller proclaimed that " we should not read *1984* as a bitter allegory on the evils of Stalinism," since the novel is really concerned with the horrors of Consumer Society:

> Under the influence of television, the consumer is intended to end up gasping wide-eyed and open-mouthed at his advertising supplements and video-screens, turned just as infantile as those Party members at the end of the Two Minutes of Hate, with their " deep, slow, ryhthmical chant of B-B! . . . B-B! . . . B-B! . . ."

[5] Julian Symons even called it (in *The Sunday Times*, 23 November 1980) " the definitive biography," which it most definitely is not. Nigel Dennis was more discerning (in the *Sunday Telegraph*, 23 November 1980): " Orwell asked that no biography be written of him—an impossible request, considering the importance of his life. But he may have envisaged falling into the hands of a writer like Professor Crick . . . a fate worse than death."

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Another contributor to Professor Howe's symposium, Bernard Avishai, produced a no less profound reflection:

> Who can read Orwell's account of Oceania's violent and pornographic telecasts without thinking about American crime shows, the soaps, the Big Events and the commercials that interrupt them?

In his special two-hour TV programme on *1984* (also shown on BBC 1), Walter Cronkite, the famous American newscaster, did not even mention the phenomenon of communism. Instead, he used the internment of the American Japanese during the Second World War as an example of government by " Big Brother." Like so many others, he presented *1984* today as a problem of the threat to freedom by technology—computers, lie-detectors, and all that—as if Orwell was concerned with inanimate robots in a science fiction and not with flesh-and-bone villains wielding totalitarian power. For Orwell the problem was the technology of power rather than the power of technology.

This dehydrated view of politics—it is, naturally, the favourite of the popular press and media, so drawn to the " telescreen "—could not be further from Orwell's view. He knew that it is people who move machines, not the other way round; and he saw the threat not in the wickedness of robots, those bloodless technical vampires, but primarily in the danger of political totalitarianism to the individual and to civil society. Big Brother is not a Dalek and *1984* is not science-fiction.

There was little in Orwell's early background (Eton, the Raj in Burma, down-and-out in Paris) to provide him with a key to the understanding of totalitarianism, but anybody with personal experience of it is amazed by his uncanny intuitive powers. Contemporary writings, those of Franz Borkenau and others, helped intellectually, but imaginatively he understood the wider picture from being acquainted with British " progressives " (and their " doublethink ") and with the communist terror in Catalonia. His personal familiarity with " censorship in Britain"—so often invoked to distort and blur his message by suggesting that his discomfiting BBC and publishing experiences were somehow relevant to his *1984* vision—nearly always involved his anti-communist writings, whether he was censored " from below " (Kingsley Martin, Victor Gollancz, T. S. Eliot) or " from above " (in the " Good Uncle Joe " period during the Second World War). To pretend that Orwell's message is not basically rooted in his revulsion against communist and pro-communist practices is to shred the evidence and doctor the tapes. He repeatedly complained about being hampered by editors and publishers, referring to " the kind of censorship under which we are now suffering and of which the Left Book Club is a symptom."

Erich Fromm, in his preface to the 1961 New American Library edition of *1984*, declared that " it would be most unfortunate if the reader smugly interpreted *1984* as another description of Stalinist barbarism, and if he does not see that it means us, too." (Walter Cronkite's " *Afterword* " to the 1983 edition repeats this theme.)

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

IN his biography Bernard Crick rejected what he severely called " the *Encounter* view of Orwell "[6] and those critics who " saw the satire as applicable only to the Soviets, and their sympathizers, and not also to the Western way of life." With the Orwellian year looming ahead, Crick tried to deflate with pinprick after penprick all who did not share this view. In particular, he criticized Conor Cruise O'Brien for saying (in *The Observer*, 18 December 1983) that *1984*

> . . . is about . . . something which can only be Communism as it developed in the Soviet Union. . . . Where, as often, a parallel with a particular system suggests itself, it is always a parallel with the Soviet system, under Stalin. Big Brother's familiar style . . . is Stalin's unmistakable style . . . The Party is a Communist party, not a Nazi one. . . . The forced labour camps described are of Communist, not Nazi type. And so on, it is all of a piece. The brilliant inventions of *Newspeak* and *Doublethink* are Orwellian extrapolations of Soviet practice, not of any other.

When Conor Cruise O'Brien, referring to Crick's assertions, ironically exclaimed that " If *1984* is even partially any kind of satire on our Western way of life, I'm a Chinaman," Crick replied (*Financial Times*, 31 December 1983):

> O'Brien is a Chinaman. His anti-Communism is myopic (therefore not likely to be effective). . . . To deny that [*1984*] satirizes ourselves as well as the Russians is simply to distance it, to see only the mote in the other's eye and not the beam in our own. Orwell was expert in seeing double.

Crick is obviously not very expert in seeing single. Unable to provide a reasoned reply to O'Brien's point, he offered incoherent double-talk. The " progressive " intelligentsia which Orwell came to dispute still cannot live without their portion of " doublethink "; but why do they have to dabble in this particular subject, get excited about it, tie themselves into knots about it? Orwell obviously got under their skin, not just at the time but now and, perhaps, forever. With their symmetrism they still *prefer* to see " the beam " in our eyes rather than " the mote " in Soviet eyes.

Bernard Crick referred to O'Brien again, if in some hectic ethnic confusion, in an article in *Tribune* (6 January 1984):

> If it was a satire of conditions in the West, [O'Brien] said, I'm a Dutchman. That explains a lot. But a bit much for everyone's favourite bull-in-a-china-shop to miss even the significance of Orwell giving Winston's Thought Police torturer the name of O'Brien.

The mind boggles. Is, then, O'Brien a Dutchman in a China shop or a Chinaman talking double-Dutch? Such careless shooting-from-the-hip is

[6] Among the critics who published articles on Orwell in *Encounter* were Rayner Heppenstall (" A Blurred Portrait," February–March 1981), Dennis J. O'Keefe and James McNamara (" Waiting for 1984," December 1982), and John Wain (" Orwell & the Intelligentsia " and " Koestler & Orwell on the Totalitarian Mind," December 1968 and September–October 1983). In his Introduction (p. 107) to *1984* Bernard Crick actually refers quite favourably to John Wain's essays on Orwell, which suggests that his allegations about " the *Encounter* view of Orwell " are perhaps only *minitrue*. . . .

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

characteristic of Crick, and so, as Nigel Dennis (true enough, a former *Encounter* editor) noticed, is the quality of his style, puerility being its essential hallmark. The Crick biography of Orwell provides a number of examples of both.

Giving the impression that Orwell somehow became his personal property, and with single-minded obsessiveness, Crick was double-quick in accusing all and sundry—" the radical Right " in his *Tribune* article, *The Times* in his letter-to-the-editor (6 January 1983)—of " body-snatching " Orwell. In *The Financial Times* he wrote:

> Body-snatchers from almost all points of the political compass descend on the long-dead Orwell: only the Communists remain consistent in rejecting him completely.

In this he could not be more mistaken.

As it happens, while Bernard Crick, Raymond Williams, and other Left forward-lookers were doing their best to " reinterpret " *1984* by refocusing its message, the Italian communists were carrying out their own analogous operation on Orwell, published as a special supplement to *l'Unità* (18 December 1983). The leader of the PCI, the late Enrico Berlinguer, criticized Orwell's " false prophecies," and went on to reject firmly the idea that in *1984* " the great English humanist " intended to depict the USSR and Stalin. This was simply an invention of " cold warriors " who wanted to manipulate the novel for their own nefarious propaganda purposes (an argument not unfamiliar to the readers of Williams, Crick, and the British communists).

Up From The Memory Hole

All these half-hearted " reinterpretations " pale into insignificance in comparison with the bold stroke performed by the Soviet press, which simply declared that *1984* is solely about . . . England and America. This clearly put Moscow one up on the Western " progressives." Orwell, at first vilified and made into an " unperson," has now been uplifted from the " memory hole." His books have not, to be sure, been published in the Soviet Union, nor are copies of foreign editions allowed into the country. On the contrary, Soviet dissidents found in possession of *1984* (like Gunnars Astra and Valery Senderov in 1983) were sentenced to 12 years' " deprivation of liberty." (Senderov, who distributed it, even received an additional five years' imprisonment on the basis of a new law which allows the Gulag camp directors to extend sentences arbitrarily.) Yet in a peculiar way George Orwell has been, if not exactly " rehabilitated," at least resurrected or reclaimed.

Operation " Rehab " began last year when *Foreign Literature* and *Literaturnaya Gazeta* published the first Soviet articles to suggest that the novel actually pertains to the West. A number of other articles followed quickly (in *Komsomolskaya Pravda*, *Moscow News, Novoe Vremya*, and *Izvestiya*). The last two published very long texts with detailed argumentation about some aspects of the work.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

According to *Novoe Vremya* (1 January 1984), Orwell recognized "the falsehoods of bourgeois democracy" which extinguishes and "vaporizes" the individual. The anti-communists have been trying "to fit the tight suit of totalitarianism tailored by Orwell to the body of really existing socialism; but in fact it is just the right cut for capitalism. . . ." The author of the article, Victor Tsopi, argued that the book was quite misunderstood. It was intended only as an anticipation by Orwell of what lay ahead for the capitalist West:

> This novel is a grim warning precisely to bourgeois society, bourgeois civilization, bourgeois democracy in which, as he feared, the poisonous roots of anti-humanism, all-devouring militarism and oppression have today thrust up truly monstrous shoots. . . .

Tsopi stressed that Orwell had been a member of the militant ILP and had fought in Spain against Franco, thus intimating that he was a sympathetic "progressive" figure, although "it would be an exaggeration to suggest that he was a convinced adherent of the communist outlook." Even so Orwell had correctly anticipated the rule of "Big Brother"—who is none other than Ronald Reagan applying Orwellian policies in the USA of 1984, to which *Moscow News* added with humour that "Reagan invests the slogan '*Ignorance is Strength*' with his own literal meaning." While *Komsomolskaya Pravda* noticed that Orwell's view of totalitarian controls "is actually in line with present-day Britain," *Izvestiya* (15 and 16 January) devoted two articles by its American correspondent Melor Sturua[7] to pointing out that they are no less applicable to present-day America:

> Every year from 1949 to 1984 has shown, more and more palpably and persuasively, that Orwell, unintentionally and without being aware of it (though perhaps that is questionable), painted not a caricature of Socialism and Communism, but a fully realistic picture of contemporary Capitalism-Imperialism. The subject of Orwell's gloomy fantasy became the reality of the Western world, and primarily of the United States of America, which is a genuine and not an imaginary centre of evil in our time. . . .

The cover of the New Year issue of the *New Statesman* (16–23 December 1983) carried the same inverted perception. It presented Orwell looking at a party in Room 101 where Margaret Thatcher stands with Ronald Reagan, the Queen, Michael Heseltine ("Ministry of Peace") and others, under the inscription "despite Everything Doubleplusgood 1984 to All Our Readers."

A word here, although there is very little new to say, about the *New Statesman*. Just as at the time of *Homage to Catalonia* (1938) the *Statesman* did not want to see Stalin for what he was, so in 1983–84 it did not want to see Andropov for what he was. Instead, with the usual ideological self-indulgence, it preferred to see Ronald Reagan (and

[7] His first name, "Melor," is fashionably (lingering Bolshevik modishness) made up from the initials of Marx, Engels, Lenin, October Revolution.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Margaret Thatcher) as " Big Brother " (and " Big Sister "). The only difference is that now it does not censor the subject but puts Orwell on the front page.

The " progessive " mentality evidently changes precious little with the change of generations. The past is an unchanging scenario of progressive good opposed to reactionary evil, heroes of the future versus villains who are all yesterday's men. The real drama of the present, its new twists and tragic turns, leaves them unmoved. The Bourbons of the Left have learnt nothing since 1917, and appear to have forgotten everything between Chernavin ("I Speak for the Silent ") and Chernenko (who silences those who speak). Why do they prefer to put a Khrushchev (with his *Secret Report*) or a Solzhenitsyn (with his *Gulag Archipelago*) at least half-way down the " memory hole "? What drives them to apply the same characteristic selective indignation and double standards to current East and West afflictions as they always did in the past? Is it so intellectually difficult or ethically problematic to establish as obvious that in 1984 Winston Smith would in the USSR be sent to a psychiatric prison or a labour camp for " slandering the Soviet state " —while in the USA he would be able to read and write as he pleased? I suspect he would even be able to get hold of Emmanuel Goldstein's famous secret treatise about Oceania, with the support of the *Washington Post*, by invoking the US " Freedom of Information " Act.

Like the poor, will the " progressives " always be with us? Although the word has a special meaning in our time, historically, the concept derives from the eighteenth-century belief in inevitable amelioration which dominated the Western mind from Condorcet, Paine and Jefferson until the beginning of the twentieth century, when J. B. Bury analysed " the idea of progress " in a book which became its epitaph. The First World War undermined the belief in history as an upward escalator, the Second gave it a *coup de grâce*. From then on the belief was retained only by those sects who were committed to the idea of " the historical inevitability of socialism." The horrors of the twentieth century even led many socialists to abandon this deterministic version of their faith, but they continued to divide mankind into " progressives " on the Left and " reactionaries " on the Right.

The communists have their own version of the concept: it covers the entire spectrum of their friends, ranging from ideological sympathisers to those whom Lenin called " deaf mutes " and who were later renamed " useful idiots." When Stalin was alive, he was always described as " the Leader of All Progressive Humanity." Once dead, he may have been pushed down a " memory hole," but in the Soviet vocabulary the word " progressive " continued to be used even more frequently. International usage increasingly resembled Soviet usage. I am using the word in the same sense in which the " progressives " use it, and to make this clear I apply inverted commas to it (Raymond Aron used for the same purpose the French word *sinistrisme*).

The Orwell celebrations provided many manifestations of the " pro-

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

gressives' " evergreen conventional wisdom. Perhaps the archetypal example is the much-decorated veteran of a thousand struggles between Progress and Reaction, James Cameron, who, writing in *The Guardian* (3 January 1984), proclaimed:

> Let me denounce the year, the book, the image, the cliché 1984 . . . George Orwell was a great and good man, and also shrewd enough to die soon thereafter [i.e. after 1948], so that 1984 would haunt us, not him.
>
> I always thought that his prophesy was rather mild anyway. Big Brother was more daunting but less boring than Small Sister, and I believe I would rather be bullied by a brute than patronized by a prig.

Such perverse choices have a long history on the Left. Another worldly-wise " progressive," G. D. H. Cole (Bernard Crick depicts him as being in the same political lineage as Orwell), put it somewhat differently in 1942: " much better be ruled by Stalin than by a pack of half-witted and half-hearted Social Democrats. . . ."[8] He would prefer that, would he? As Orwell said: " One has to belong to the intelligentsia to believe things like that, no ordinary man could be such a fool."

Ex Oriente Lux

Who can be listened to on the subject today? Not the twisters who just can't bear to concede a point which Orwell himself insisted upon a dozen times; and certainly not the Soviet "Rehab " corps. I recommend the East European dissidents, the " Winston Smiths " who survived Stalin's brain-washings and post-Stalin " rehabilitations," and who are talking to us with the chastened voice of historical experience. None of them is on record as preferring to be bullied by a brute than patronized by a prig. They know where Big Brother has his headquarters.

Thus the fate of Orwell's last book is perhaps best gauged by the juxtaposition of the reaction to it by " progressive " commentators in the West and by unofficial commentators in the East. Among those in the communist countries who happen to have read it, it is difficult to find any who fail to be struck by its perceptiveness and its painful relevance to their own life. In Stalin's time, Czeslaw Milosz (the future Nobel Prize winner) wrote that Orwell's Party readers " are amazed that a writer who never lived in Russia should have so keen a perception of its life," an observation Crick himself quotes. This year, a Czech sociologist, Milan Simecka, writes in the Introduction to the *samizdat* edition of *1984*:

> When I read the story of Winston Smith, I received a shock, because all of a sudden I realized that this was my own story I was reading. . . . Those living in Eastern Europe, and especially those who were born here and who have lived through all the "victories " and defeats of real socialism, are struck, when reading *1984*, by many astounding similarities. . . . The similarity to our everday life comes as a physical

[8] The Fabian Society pamphlet *100 years of Fabian Socialism, 1884–1984* (March 1984) has the following reference: " The Coles understood the danger of totalitarianism, kept clear of the Communist Party without ever being anti-Communist. . . ."

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> shock, neither pleasant nor amusing. The prophetic accuracy of the book arouses in us feelings that are difficult to describe . . . a numbing sense of *déjà vu*. . . . I have grown up in a world of forbidden books, a world of omnipresent indoctrination, where the past was being rewritten all the time. . . . Can you wonder, given all this, that Winston Smith came to seem to me like my own brother?
> *Index on Censorship*, February 1984

It is not so difficult for Czechoslovaks to " imagine a boot stamping on a human face " after their experience between 1948 and 1984 and the military suppression of all hopes for " socialism with a human face."

IN Poland during the Solidarity period (1980–81), an " underground " publisher (Miroslaw Chojecki, now an exile in Paris) organized—with official permission—a book exhibition in Warsaw which included " illegally " published works, and among them Orwell's *1984*. Since General Jaruzelski's *coup*, Polish underground publications again frequently refer to Orwell,[9] whose influence can also be seen in the fact that some of his phrases have found their way into everyday Polish language, just as they did into English. There is even a scholarly book, published in *samizdat* in 1982 (under the imprint of the University in Cracow), entitled *Newspeak* and devoted to the " Orwellization " of the Polish language. As the editors explain, the work is based on the proceedings of a scholarly conference held at the University in January 1981, when (as they say) " truth was being restored to words."

> To the organizers of the conference the question of language seemed to be one of the most important elements in the social ferment, in the struggle to achieve a decent basis for our everyday life and a right to live in a reality which is not falsified and constantly redefined, in which language has been transformed into an instrument for enslavement instead of being an instrument serving human communication.

Adam Michnik took up the same theme:

> I believe that a dispute about language has been the central element of Polish intellectual life for the last 35 years. It concerns our ability to defend reality and to communicate with each other. In that period a great many people have lost the ability to communicate because of the language foisted upon them.

The most succinct formulation of the problem was by Stanislaw J. Lec: " Does surrealism cease to be surrealism if it becomes reality? " This goes to the heart of the matter—which has been precisely described by Leszek Kolakowski (*Trialogue*, December 1983):

[9] An article entitled " Ignorance is Strength " (in the underground publication *Promienisci*, November 1983) describes, in Orwellian terminology, official propaganda under Jaruzelski. Another *samizdat* publication, *Solidarity Information* (Mazowsze Region, No. 159), discloses under the title " Orwell Reborn " the confidential Party instruction to the press which is quite similar to the secret recommendations by the Control Office for the media contained in the famous *Black Book on Censorship* published in *samizdat* in 1977. Cf. my articles in *The Times* (26 and 27 September 1977) and *The Washington Post* (6 November 1977).

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> The intolerable aspect of Sovietism is the open mendacity of public language. The adjective " open " needs to be stressed here. The point is not that the official verbiage is full of lies, but that its ostensible content is not really supposed to have semantic value in the first place; it belongs to a realm of reality which has little to do with daily life or daily speech; its function is not to inform but always to order, to regulate human behaviour, to threaten, to encourage, to forbid, etc. People who have properly assimilated the usage of " *Newspeak* " are not even expected to believe that it is conveying something that might be true or false in the normal sense: they are expected to behave according to the rulers' wishes. The language of politics in the Western world may of course be infected with lies, be hypocritical, stupid, or brutal; it still remains a language with a normal function. The language of Sovietism has changed ontologically, as it were: it has become an element of the practical execution of power and has nearly lost other functions; it has become as a-semantic as music. . . .

The genius of Orwell was best manifested in his having imaginatively understood and conveyed this, although the people on the Left whom he tried to instruct are still completely missing the point.

IN its fatherland the use of " *Newspeak* " is as pervasive as ever. As usual, the recent " elections " (99·9 per cent in favour) to the Supreme Soviet were described by headlines like THE REALITY OF OUR DEMOCRACY (*Izvestiya*, 31 January 1984). A report in *Izvestiya* (25 February 1984) of the meeting of similar " parliamentary representatives " from communist countries held in Hanoi was entitled THE NOBLE MISSION OF PARLIAMENTARIANS (they also regularly attended the meetings of the " Inter-Parliamentary " Union. . .). The horrors of " the capitalist world " are depicted with familiar and routinized deceitfulness. One example among myriad instances of the continuing use of the Orwellian " reversal " technique is an article on the US media in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* (29 February 1984): GENOCIDE THROUGH CENSORSHIP. Orwell explained it presciently when he wrote that " if thought corrupts language, language can also corrupt thought," and he made this point (in 1946) with reference to totalitarian " cultures ":

> I should expect to find—this is a guess which I have not sufficient knowledge to verify—that the German, Russian and Italian languages have all deteriorated in the last ten or fifteen years, as a result of dictatorship.

In Italy and West Germany, the blighted languages, sturdy plants that they are, have recovered their normal character in democratic and open societies. In communist states Orwell's insight has been confirmed. The only exception was Yugoslavia, where a translation of *1984* was officially permitted to be published (by BIGZ Publications).

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BUT this is a reminder that " *Newspeak* " did not start with Stalin. It was Lenin who spoke first about the necessity of " conquering the language," even if it reached its totalitarian zenith under Stalin. The ideological codification of " *Newspeak* " continues, and its vocabulary is constantly adapted and applied to new circumstances (Shi'ites in Iran are no longer "progressive," those in Lebanon still are; pacifist Christians are " progressive," Lebanese Christians are not, etc.). Current usage is organized and dictated by ideological instruments of the Party; as Alain Besançon has remarked: in totalitarian logocracies, power is exercized " at the tip of the tongue." Soviet linguists confirm this Orwellian perspective:

> The great task of the mass media in socialist society is to develop and bring to perfection the consciousness of its members in the desired direction.

Orwell pointed out that the function of " *Newspeak* " was to try to render impossible any other mode of thinking.

He also knew that it was not limited to communist countries—it is, quite voluntarily, embraced in non-communist countries. The same Soviet linguists stress that " certain traits inherent in the socialist laguage can also be found in the progressive press of the capitalist world."[10] Orwell described it pithily in " Politics and the English Language " (1946).

> People are imprisoned for years without trial, or shot in the back of the neck or sent to die of scurvy in Arctic labour camps: this is called *elimination of unreliable elements*. Such phraseology is needed if one wants to name things without calling up mental pictures of them. . . . The great enemy of clear language is insincerity. When there is a gap between one's real and one's declared aims, one turns as it were instinctively to long words and exhausted idioms, like a cuttlefish squirting ink.

The phraseology continues to flourish, the cuttlefish are still squirting.

Indeed, the infiltration of " *Newspeak* " into democratic countries, and the adoption of some of its aspects by the media, is probably the most glaring yet the least noticed contemporary phenomenon. One of the few who do refer to it, Richard Pipes, writes in his new book, *Survival is Not Enough*:

[10] *Language in the Developed Socialist Society, A Symposium by the Academy of Science* (Moscow, 1982), pp. 15, 88.

In his review of *1984* in *Partisan Review* (July 1949), Philip Rahv (of whom Crick is critical in his biography of Orwell in his Introduction to *1984*) wrote:

> Now what is " double-think," actually, if not the technique continuously practised by the Communists and their liberal collaborators, dupes and apologists. Nor is it a technique available exclusively to Soviet citizens. Right here in New York any issue of the *Daily Worker* or of *The Daily Compass* will provide you with illustrations of it as vicious and ludicrous as any you will come across in Orwell's story. . . .

Crick wrote that, " unfortunately, Rahv's reading of Orwell proved very influential: the right accepted it and many of the left reacted against Orwell because of the popularity of this well-meant but most partial and crude reading."

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The vocabularly of East-West relations, shared by Western " liberals " and the Soviet apparatus, serves the same purpose as the official jargon inside the Soviet Union. It focuses the discussion on matters which are desired but often do not exist, and places out of bounds subjects which exist but are deemed best unmentioned. It perverts one's perception of phenomena by attaching to them pejorative words when they are considered inimical, and positive ones when they are useful. . . . Because " Communism " evokes negative images in the West, it has been gradually supplanted with " socialism." For some time now, Moscow has been calling its bloc the " Socialist camp," and this usage, too, has spread to Western media. . . . " Liberal " journalists have not only assimilated much of this vocabulary but introduced refinements of their own, which are promptly borrowed by Moscow. They routinely call someone critical of the Soviet Union a " hard-line anti-Communist," but never refer to anyone as a " soft-line pro-Communist," even though every adjective demands its opposite. An " extremist," when applied to a person's views on the Soviet Union, invariably means an anti-Communist, pro-Soviet " extremist " being unknown to journalism: the latter is a " moderate."

Linguistic manipulation causes mental confusion and as such it is extremely dangerous. It enables Soviet political strategists to dominate the intellectual climate of East-West relations and to insinuate themselves into Western political discussions. It allows them to project false identities of interest between the two systems and to incite internecine conflicts of opinion as well as of interest within the Western community. It blurs the line between fiction and reality. . . .

WHILE in Eastern Europe there is a demotic linguistic resistance to " *Newspeak*," in the West the " Finlandization " of language is perceptibility progressing. The mainline Western media allowed the " progressives " to capture the word " Peace," and now they can safely use the Soviet ideological concept of " Peaceful Coexistance " as a substitute. In the 1940 and '50s, the term " Cold War " was generally understood as the Soviet method of political warfare; now its derivative, " Cold Warrior," is a term of abuse applied to those who advocate resistance to the Soviet Union and not appeasement. Examples can, alas, be multiplied, in the unthinking acceptance of the stereotypes which increasingly pollute our language. The term " *Newspeak* " is more and more applied only to Western usages. *A Dictionary of Newspeak* (compiled by Jonathan Green) has been published recently, and it is concerned with Western jargon, not with the communist perversions of language. The same applies to the *Quarterly Journal of Doublespeak* edited by William Lutz of Rutgers University's English department. The *Morning Star* now calls Britain " Airstrip One," and is certain that " Big Brother is alive and well in the US."

What Western journalists and broadcasters, statesmen and diplomats often seem not to realize is that the climate of opinion created by the confusing use, if not adoption, of Soviet terms and their frequent

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

acceptance at face value considerably undermines the Western position. This not only disarms the West politically, but because of it even the negotiations with the Soviet Union are " loaded against the West." " The encroachments on our languages cripple the Western case by smuggling Soviet premises into the very framework of the debate. At the time of Yalta the expression " Soviet democracy " was not considered oxymoronic; now it is " peaceful coexistence " which is taken at face value. Obviously the attempts to reverse Orwell's message are part of a wider process of meaning-reversal which is affecting the whole of the West.

This applies not only to the present but also to the past: " who controls the past, controls the future." Raymond Williams, obsessed with his fearful symmetrism, provides an undifferentiated and equidistant amalgam of Soviet and Western historical writing. Looking " beyond [the] differences of systems," he takes up

> . . . the point [which] bears most closely on the notorious " memory hole." For if there is one thing that has not proved necessary in manipulating majority opinion, it is systematically rewriting the past. On the contrary, the past in itself becomes a kind of memory hole, from which only a few scholars and researchers bother to uncover and recover the facts. Why were the first atom bombs dropped on Japan *after* its government had proposed the outline of peace? What really happened in the Gulf of Tonkin? Which way and during what peace negotiations was the *General Belgrano* sailing? These are questions (none, in their whole context, with very simple answers) which with a thousand of others, from the role of Trotsky in the Russian Revolution to the policy of Mao and the Red Guards in China, are still intensely inquired into by small minorities, while the dominant public stance, in one social order after another, is to go blithely on with the news of the day, leaving the past to the obsessive and to the dry-as-dust. . . .

Is this a case of " ignorance is strength," or of weakness through ignorance? To identify Western controversies on contemporary history with systematic Soviet rewriting of history is a casuistic amalgam. In the 1960s and '70s, American " revisionist " historians—a spectrum which ranged from the old William Appleton Williams to his younger New Left pupils—worked hard to put the blame on the West for the onset of the " Cold War." They lost the debate, I think, although, notably enough, it was conducted with open arguments and references to authentic historical sources. Footnotes were the weapons, not Gulag camps. But the symmetrical imperative calls for putting Western patterns of historical controversy on a par with the sub-standard Soviet practices of historical falsification.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE basic differences between the Soviet and Western historiography are as clear as they are deep. Michel Heller has remarked[11]:

> Soviet citizens under 25 may know who Assurbanipal is (they've heard of him from school), but not who Khrushchev was: the name of the former First Secretary of the Central Committee and Prime Minister has been completely eliminated from newspapers, textbooks, and historical monographs. Lack of memory, for the historian too, becomes a virtue in socialist countries. In certain conditions it is even a guarantee of security. It is easier to predict the future than the past.
>
> The permanent transformation of the past makes lies absolutely necessary. It turns deceit into a fundamental element of ideology. George Orwell, first in the West to have understood the essence of the Soviet system, remarked that " organized lying is something integral to totalitarianism," and he forecast that " it would continue even if concentration camps and secret police forces ceased to be necessary." " The really frightening thing about totalitarianism," wrote Orwell, " is not that it commits ' atrocities,' but that it attacks the concept of objective truth. . . ."

All this will be amply illustrated in a comparison of successive editions of the Soviet Party history and *The Great Soviet Encyclopaedia* (of which the seventh and the third editions were respectively published and completed this year). These are the institutional monuments to Soviet historiographical " vaporization." For those who, unlike Soviet citizens, have access to previous editions they provide an observation point on the Soviet " memory hole." Perhaps the finest example of the post-Stalinist Orwellian " memory hole " technique was the circular sent out to all subscribers to the third edition of *The Great Soviet Encyclopaedia* requesting them to replace—" with scissors and glue "—the page containing the biographical note on Lavrenti Beria by a new page with an entry on the Bering Straits. The new page was enclosed with the circular. It would be difficult for Raymond Williams in his symmetrical frenzy to find an example to match this in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

Since the scrapping of the celebrated Stalinist bible, *The Short Course of Party History* (1938), Khrushchev and Brezhnev managed to denounce their predecessors in their own textbooks of Party history. For whatever reasons, Andropov did not succeed in doing this before he died, and only time will tell whether Chernenko will have sufficient power and time to obliterate the memory of his old rival. But, although the falsifications are somewhat less blatant today, they remain the same in principle: Soviet historiography is still contemporary politics projected into the past. The fact that it is now conducted in a more sophisticated way does not basically change its Orwellian character. The Moscow Trials are still

[11] Michel Heller, " History as Contraband " in *Survey* (No. 2, 1982). Cf. also *Contemporary History in the Soviet Mirror* (1964), ed. John Keep; Leopold Labedz, " Rehabilitation and Perdition " in *Problems of Communism* (No. 2, 1963); J. P. Shapiro, " Soviet Historiography and the Moscow Trials " in *Russian Review* (No. 1, 1968); A. P. van Gondoever, *Angst voor het verleden* (Fear of the Past), (Utrecht, 1983).

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

non-existent, and so is the " secret protocol " of the Stalin-Hitler Pact. A counterfeit history does not cease to be counterfeit if additional details are provided, just as a false banknote does not become legal currency if the counterfeiter's techniques improve.

IT is revealing that those who refuse to recognize the difference in principle between Soviet and Western history-writing, and prefer to apply the metaphor of the Orwellian " memory hole " to both, are so oblivious to the misdemeanours of their own comrades. One example among many is particularly relevant to the story of the " re-interpretation " of Orwell.

Writing in *Tribune* (6 January 1984) about *1984*, Bernard Crick asserted that Orwell was " a pretty typical *Tribune* socialist, in other words of the kind of young Michael Foot and the middle-aged Aneurin Bevan." Was Crick being serious, or merely blinkered? Orwell was certainly *not* a " typical " *Tribune* socialist. As a " fervent anti-Communist " (Crick's own description) Orwell wrote his *Tribune* column, " As I Please," in a way which was very untypical of the rest of the paper.

Early in 1948, Orwell wrote an open letter to *Tribune* about their persistent differences. It is reproduced in *The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters* (Vol. 4, pp. 449–455), but is not referred to by Crick. (In his biography he only quotes, strangely enough, Orwell's congratulatory remark from his piece published in *Tribune* on its 10th anniversay.) In his letter "In Defence of Comrade Zilliacus " (which was *not* published), Orwell wrote that *Tribune* was

> sitting on the fence, uttering contradictory slogans and getting nowhere. . . . *Tribune* has consistently, over a period of years, failed to make its position clear. He [Zilliacus] knows that the only big political questions today are: for Russia—against Russia, for America—against America, for democracy—against democracy. . . . To be anti-American nowadays is to shout with the mob . . . to speak favourably of America, to recall that the Americans helped us in 1940 when the Russians were supplying the Germans with oil and setting on their Communist Parties to sabotage the war effort, is to be branded as a " reactionary." And I suspect that when *Tribune* joins in the chorus it is more from fear of this label than from genuine conviction.
>
> Surely, if one is going to write about foreign policy at all, there is one question that should be answered plainly. It is: " If you *had* to choose between Russia and America, which would you choose? " It will not do to give the usual quibbling answer, " I refuse to choose." In the end the choice may be forced upon us. . . . And in spite of all the fashionable chatter of the moment, everyone knows in his heart that we should choose America.

One looks in vain in Crick or Williams for this clear-cut reflection of Orwell's political attitude in the last period of his life, the years when he wrote *1984*.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Orwell And The *Tribune* Legend

What of *Tribune* itself? It too has consigned such recollections to a " memory hole " (together with other reminiscences of its political past). With the advent of the Orwellian year, *Tribune* tried to squeeze the last ounce of glory from its association with Orwell. On 30 December 1983, it reproduced his " As I Please " column of 2 February 1945; and in early 1984, for several weeks, it printed a number of articles on *1984* by " commentators of both Left and Right." " This was an unusual display of editorial tolerance, since *Tribune* would not normally touch certain writers of the Right (such as Alfred Sherman or Peregrine Worsthorne) with a barge-pole. Somehow this was supposed to imply that today's *Tribune* has a special claim on Orwell, and its aim was " to provide some perspective."

Curiously enough, the first article in the series (by Bernard Crick) was printed alongside an excerpt from a book by the late Wilfred Burchett, the communist propagandist famous for his " reports " on alleged US " bacteriological warfare " in Korea. This in itself was an indication of how far the sensitivities of *Tribune* are from Orwell's own. But it is really the whole history of *Tribune* that " provides some perspective " on the question of Orwell in 1984. It is, I am convinced, fair to say that during the 47 years of its existence its editorial line, with all its vicissitudes, never once coincided with Orwell's own attitude to such problems as communism, the Soviet Union, and foreign policy, even—as his unpublished letter quoted above testifies—at the time he was writing for it. For most of the time, and in particular in its pre-war period (and especially so at present), *Tribune* was and is in striking contrast to Orwell's own position.

Before the Second World War *Tribune* advocated a " Popular Front " with the communists. (Orwell was against it.) Its editorial of 25 August 1939 was a classic of fellow-travellerish political obtuseness, an immortal boob in the annals of quotable nonsense:

> A pact of non-aggression between Russia and Germany, if it is signed, will be a great reinforcement for peace in Eastern Europe. At the same time it is a lie to suggest that it leaves Germany a free hand against Poland or anyone else.

On 1 September 1939, the day Hitler attacked Poland, *Tribune* was unlucky enough to publish another editorial still stressing that " the non-aggression pact signed by Stalin with Hitler had strongly reinforced the power for peace in Europe." In an article called " Stalin—Architect for Peace " it reiterated that " only malicious or ignorant commentators could pretend that the Soviet-German Pact is an arrangement to give Germany a free hand in Europe." This " contemptible lie " was also criticized by Konni Zilliacus (Orwell later castigated him as a " crypto-Communist "):

> Let us dismiss the tales of a secret Nazi-Soviet alliance for the partition of Poland.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

During the Second World War *Tribune* changed its position. Orwell was a shade naive about this when he wrote, after the war, that " *Tribune's* anti-Americanism is not sincere but is an attempt to keep in with fashionable opinion. . . ." This surely was wishful thinking on his part: in fact, the continuity of the Left was reasserting itself. If he were alive in 1984 he would see that *Tribune* has almost come full circle during the post-war period, moving from the initial " *Keep Left* " to its present " hard Left " position.

It was, to be sure, not possible simply to return to the fellow-travellerish position of the 1930s. Too much embarrassing Soviet dirt had come to the surface in between to make this politically respectable. For the same reason, the two anniversary anthologies of selected *Tribune* writings published in book form (*Tribune 21* and *Tribune 40*) carefully omitted embarrasing pre-war texts such as those quoted above. But on its 45th anniversary *Tribune* came close to an apologia for its stand in the 1930s. In an editorial (1 January 1982) reviewing its own history, it censured the pro-rearmament stand of its opponents before the outbreak of the war with Hitler:

> Governments, industrialists and financiers were clamouring for rearmament—reviving the spectre of war. . . . *Tribune* attacked the Government's pro-Franco indifference to the Republican plight in Spain. It attacked the plunge towards another war in which the working man would be called upon to die to make the world safe for capitalism.

Oblivious to any inconsistency, the editorial continued:

> When war was declared in September 1939, *Tribune* flung itself into its own contribution to the struggle against fascism, underlining the duties of all socialists within that struggle.

Readers were kindly spared the telling details of what actually happened; but the post-war *Tribune* position which Orwell had criticized was now (in 1982) criticized in the *Tribune* editorial . . . from the very opposite standpoint:

> As the cold war grew more glacial . . . the paper tended then to over-react from the rejection of Stalinist communism into what seemed to be a fervent pro-American position—so that at first, it could even make supporting noises over American (" United Nations ") intervention in Korea. . . . The leanings towards America diminished sharply later, when the full reality of Dulles's anti-communist crusade emerged.

IN that same issue, as I have noted, Orwell's column on the 10th anniversary of *Tribune* was reproduced, but to avoid telling the whole truth about its schizoid past, *Tribune* omitted the first paragraph, which contained the following passage:

> *Tribune* in its short life has been two distinct papers, if not three, and

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> my own contacts with it have varied sharply, starting off, if I remember rightly, with a rap on the knuckles.

It also omitted a passage (italicized below) from another paragraph:

> With the outbreak of war [*Tribune's*] circulation had taken a severe knock, because the Communists and near-Communists who had been among its warmest supporters now refused to help in distributing it. *Some of them went on writing for it, however, and the futile controversy between "supporters" and "opposers" of the war continued to rumble in its columns while the German armies gathered for the spring offensives.*

Tribune's claim was that its "views of the Stalin dictatorship" were justified "by the Khrushchev revelations." This scarcely amounted to an adequate description of *Tribune's* ambiguities; in any case, the "revelations" merely led it to become (like many other papers of the "radical left") not anti-Soviet, but more anti-American. They may have been frustrated Utopians, but they remained "true believers." They found in a shrill anti-Americanism a compensatory factor for their inability to extol "the country with a Hope and a Plan."

This was the very opposite of Orwell's own evolution. The contrasts and contradictions made it necessary for the "progressives" to suppress into their subconscious, or to drop into a "memory hole," all those embarrassing elements of their past. Recollection might undermine their present political positions. Looking at 1984 with "some perspective," it is obvious why *Tribune* was so concerned. *Tribune* is clearly not in "the Orwell tradition," yet claims him for its own: a strange case of "Orwellians" tiptoeing around the skeletons still rattling in the closet—the skeletons of Stalin and . . . Orwell.

The Question of Orwell's Socialism

In the "progressive" rites for St Orwell the *leitmotif* was that he was a "socialist," and therefore the present representatives of the "socialist tradition" are his legitimate heirs. The putative body-snatchers' foul deed consisted of claiming spiritual affinity with Orwell, but the "progressives" made no attempt (with one exception, to which I'll return in a moment) to substantiate the charges. Why not falsify the "body-snatchers'" claim by contrasting it with the authentic voice of Orwell *on specific issues?* Not on your life. Instead there were selective quotations, general labels, and conventional Left stereotypes.

In fact, no one among the mysterious corps of "body-snatchers," whoever they were, ever denied that Orwell considered himself "a socialist." This did not prevent his latter-day "followers" from triumphantly proving it with a well-known quotation about *1984:*

> My recent novel is *not* intended as an attack on Socialism or on the British Labour Party (of which I am a supporter) but as a show-up of the perversions to which a centralised economy is liable and which have already been partly realised in Communism and Fascism. . . .

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> The scene of the book is laid in Britain in order to emphasize that the English-speaking races are not innately better than anyone else and that totalitarianism, *if not fought against*, could triumph anywhere.

If this remark points to anything, it is to the need to fight totalitarianism (the italics are Orwell's own), but this is not the point emphasized by those who quote it so frequently. By claiming the " socialist " Orwell as their patron-saint they provide an alibi for themselves.

In the same passage Orwell stressed that " totalitarian ideas have taken root in the minds of intellectuals everywhere." It is a supreme irony that those who, following his advice and example, are fighting totalitarianism are denounced as " cold warriors " and " body-snatchers " by those who concentrate on *anti*-anti-communism. It is, of course, their right to reject anti-communism; but to invoke the anti-communist Orwell for that purpose is an intellectual fraud.

Anyway, what is in the " socialist " name? When Orwell used it 35 years ago it was still possible to adopt the label and be " a fervent anti-communist." But like so many other words, concepts, and ideas, " socialism " no longer signifies today what it signified for Orwell. Would he believe today that (as he put it on joining the ILP) " the only régime which in the long run will permit freedom of speech is a socialist régime "? At that time (as well as now), the believers in a socialist Utopia were, as Sidney Hook put it, " judging capitalism by its operations and socialism by its hopes and aspirations." The difference is that today the experience of " the perversions of the centralised economy " (and of centralized power in the hands of the Party-State) is far wider, deeper, and better known.

It is, naturally, impossible to say whether Orwell would still use the term " socialist " in the present circumstances, after an additional 35 years of historical experience. His attachment to equality—his belief in the common decency and common sense of the common man—might or might not be represented for him by the same label now. But if we cannot say what Orwell would call himself today, we can be quite certain that he would not be a " *progressive*."

Except for a very short period of time, he never was. And it is because he abandoned the Left's " smelly little orthodoxies " of the " progressive " stance that he achieved his greatness. Had he not, Orwell would not be Orwell, but yet another conventional Utopian. Without his contempt for the conventional wisdom of the day, and his anti-totalitarian passion and understanding, he would have written neither *Animal Farm* nor *1984*; and he would have been forgotten.

I HAVE no doubt that Orwell would never have shared the post-war illusions which he has done so much to dispel. Can one imagine him falling for all those self-renewing fallacies which marked the deceptive expectations of the Left (and, often, also of the Right) about the Soviet Union? Can one visualize the author of *Animal Farm*

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

subscribing to the " theory of convergence " of Western and Soviet societies in the imminent " liberalization " of the USSR after " the Thaw "? (More than 20 years ago Isaac Deutscher assured us that " the Goddess of Liberty " would soon be moving from the West to the East . . .) Would Orwell enthuse in the 1980s, as each new " Big Brother " generates Western " liberal " expectations for fundamental reform? Would he affirm, with Michael Walzer and Richard Lowenthal (in Irving Howe's *1984 Revisited* anthology), that the Soviet Union is no longer totalitarian? Would he hold with Roy Medvedev, writing in *l'Unità* (18 December 1983), that computerization would facilitate liberalization in the USSR, but would produce only a " Great Fear " in the USA?

In 1984, sad to record, Big Brother still loves his Winston Smiths in all the communist countries. In the USSR dissidents are in mental prisons or in Gulag labour camps. In Poland Solidarity has been suppressed. In Czechoslovakia the voluble hopes of 1968 have given way to the silence of the grave. And nobody (as Senator Moynihan put it) " swims through shark-infested waters to reach the shores of East Germany. . . ."

As early as 1940, Orwell referred to " the squalid farce of left-wing politics." Can one imagine the author of *1984* calling massacre a " liberation " as so many " progressives " did in respect of Vietnam and Cambodia? Or adopting a pacifist position—which he never did when he was alive? Saying "' Better Red than Dead " rather than pointing out that " peace " propaganda " is helpful to totalitarianism "? In short, embracing those whom he denounced and who, poor impoverished spirits, are so eager to embrace him now? All this because he was a " socialist "? He was never that kind of " socialist."

The Case Of Simon Leys

One author, Simon Leys (Pierre Ryckmans), who unlike the Wiliamses and the Cricks must be taken with intellectual seriousness, has presented a view somewhat similar to theirs on this point.[12] Simon Leys was the single most important source describing the real character of the Chinese " Cultural Revolution " in his reports and books. He saw and analysed the operation of Orwell's mechanisms—" Big Brother " and " Two Minutes' Hate " with *The Little Red Book*. At the time when Maoism was becoming fashionable among the " revolutionary " romantics in California and France, he brought realities into sharp focus. In his splendid polemic against Han Suyin[13] he performed the same valuable service in dissecting Chinese propaganda techniques as his predecessors did in Stalin's time in exposing the "Red Dean," Hewlett Johnson, or D. N. Pritt, QC. He certainly needs no introduction to Orwell either in print or in reality. I find it, therefore, all the more inexplicable that his book on Orwell is marred by a certain incomprehension of the wider, larger issues

[12] In his new book called *Orwell ou l'Horreur de la Politique* (Paris, Hermann, 1984). Excerpts from it were published in *Commentaire* (Paris, No. 24 & No. 25), in *Le Monde* (30 December 1983), and in *Quadrant* (Sydney, December 1983).

[13] Simon Leys, " The Double Vision of Han Suyin," *Encounter*, November 1980.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

involved, even though it displays at the same time a highly perceptive analysis of Orwell's writings. Stressing Orwell's conversion to " socialism," he goes so far as to contend that:

> His socialist " illumination " was as sudden and absolute as the *satori* experienced by a Zen adept, or one could say that *The Road to Wigan Pier* was his Way to Damascus.

One " could say " many things, but some of them obviously trouble Simon Leys, for in the very next sentence he tries to handle the possible objections to this rather fanciful portrait of Orwell, whose " Englishness " and commonsense empiricism escape him. He indulges in some mystagogic flights of imagination:

> The metaphors may appear inappropriate when we consider his innate allergy to all forms of religion (and more particularly he felt an even stronger revulsion for a certain form of socialist mystique that used " to draw with magnetic force every fruit-juice drinker, nudist, sandal-wearer, sex-maniac, Quaker, ' Nature-cure ' quack, pacifist and feminist in England "); and yet it seems that only a reference to a religious experience could adequately account for the instantaneous, total and unshakeable character of his new commitment.

Total and unshakeable? Leys makes Orwell into a " true believer " which he emphatically was not. His socialism was demonstrably not a form of religious experience (as Leys' comparison of Orwell with Simone Weil seems to imply).

ON a more down-to-earth level Simon Leys maintains that " For Orwell, socialism provided the final solution of a very personal problem: how to communicate with the oppressed." Judging by his last novel which was not a socialist communication, it was hardly a solution, much less the " final " one.

All Leys' quotations from Orwell, showing his concern for " the underdog " and his attachment to " justice and liberty " as fundamental values of socialism, merely underline the fact that the nature of his political commitment to " socialism " was pretty vague, that there was a certain incongruity between the concrete character of his specific reactions to the political events of his epoch and the rather general nature of his socialist commitment. Contrary to what Bernard Crick tries to make of Orwell, he was not really a systematic political thinker (and Crick's comparison with Hobbes is wildly out of place). His genius lay in giving imaginative expression to the understanding of the *sui generis* experience of the epoch: the totalitarian system. This was a remarkable achievement, considering that even now, after so many decades, there is so little understanding of it among those who have no direct personal knowledge of it. Still, this is no reason to make Orwell into a theoretician, or to portray him as a saint or a knight *sans peur et sans reproche*.[14] One

[14] For a sceptical view of Orwell, see Herb Greer's sharp analysis, " Orwell in Perspective," *Commentary* (March 1983).

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

must be especially wary of drawing any " progressive " conclusions for today about " socialist countries," or socialism in general, from his commitment at a time when " Left anti-communism " was a powerful ideological force (and the Socialist International was still a hostile target of communist *Agitprop* rather than a venue for a " dialogue " between Willy Brandt and Boris Ponomarev).

Simon Leys writes about Orwell's " socialism " as if it were a self-explanatory concept and its meaning self-evident. Yet this, as we know, is not exactly the case. Seen in historical perspective, there are only three ways of approaching the problem of Orwell's " socialism." One is to treat it as a belief in Utopia; but Orwell, a gritty commonsensical fellow, was not a Utopian. The second is to take the historical experience of the " socialist " (i.e. communist) countries and analyse their institutional evolution—what it has been and might be. This is what Orwell did, 35 years ago, in *1984*.

This third approach is to bypass both the dream and the nightmare, to offer a realistic programme of social and institutional development. What kind of transformation of historic societies would satisfy certain ideals and socialist desiderata (including Orwell's own)? How would it deal with the problem that many such values may be incompatible in practice? Orwell might well have subscribed to Leszek Kolakowski's manifesto, " How to Be a Consevative-Liberal Socialist."[15]

In short, it is not enough to apply in the 1984 discussion of Orwell's " socialism " the old fallacy, nailed down by Sidney Hook, of "judging capitalism by its operations and socialism by its hopes and aspirations." For somebody like Orwell, with his common sense and *penchant* for the concrete, and his abhorrence of the loose use of words, it is only right and just to apply such standards to his own ideas, rather than take them out of historical context as if they had only a sentimental and not an intellectual content.

But that is just what Simon Leys does, as if to show that what appeared *desirable* (his italics) to Orwell at an early state of his political evolution is to be decisive in the analysis of his relevance today. Ley writes:

> Of course, no one could deny that Orwell's socialism presented a few paradoxes. He entirely ignored Marxist theory; he had total (and fully justified) contempt for a large part of the socialist intelligentsia; he cursed the communist experiment in its entirety; he believed that " all revolutions are failures." With all that, the fact that he persisted with such obstinacy in affirming that he was a " socialist " may indeed appear somewhat disconcerting. . . . Actually, he wanted to rediscover what he considered the fundamental values of socialism—the ideal of " justice and liberty " that was being " buried beneath layer after layer of doctrinaire priggishness, party squabbles and half-baked ' progressivism ' until it is like a diamond hidden under a mountain of dung. The job of the Socialist is to get it out again."

[15] Leszek Kolakowski, " How to Be a Conservative-Liberal Socialist," *Encounter*, October 1978.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

If this is what Orwell thought (at one or another stage of his political development), still Simon Leys loyally admits that

> In all other respects, he entertained no illusions: " Collectivism leads to concentration camps, leader worship and war. There is no way out of this unless a planned economy can be somehow combined with the freedom of the intellect, which can only happen if the concept of right and wrong is restored to politics." He perceived clearly that a centralized economy could become a grave menace for individual freedom and that, in this situation " the State may come to mean no more than a self-elected political party, and oligarchy and privilege can return, based on power rather than on money."

LEYS maintains that " the interpretation according to which Orwell's political stand would have drastically shifted had he lived long enough does not withstand analysis " because " in the realm of *principles* his convictions never wavered." He admits that Orwell changed, for instance, his belief that " it would be pointless to try resisting Fascism without first achieving a socialist revolution "—he " effectively ceased to believe in the imminent *possibility* of such revolutionary upheavals." But he argues (a shade ambivalently in my view) that " there is nothing in his writings that would allow us to conclude that he actually ceased to consider these *desirable*."

Does all this mean that while Orwell did not believe in " Utopia," he would not give up his belief in " Revolution "? Here it comes—

> . . . when a political movement that dissociates the cause of liberty from that of justice, now attempts to press-gang his dead body into its ranks, the abuse seems enormous. Orwell always faced his enemies with much equanimity; one wonders, however, if he could have kept his cool, had he been confronted with his latter-day admirers.

Unlike Williams, Leys does give a specific reference:

> An outrageous example of this kind of manipulation can be provided by a recent article by N. Podhoretz.

The article in question, " If Orwell Were Alive Today," was published in the American monthly, *Harpers* (January 1983). Its author, Norman Podhoretz (the editor of *Commentary*), made many points similar to my own. He went on to say:

> Despite Crick's sophistical protestations, there can be no doubt that Orwell did belong in " the camp of the Cold War " while he was still alive. Nor can there be much doubt that if he were alive today he would have felt a greater kinship with the neo-conservatives who are calling for resistance to Soviet imperialism than with either the socialist supporters of *détente* or the coalition of neutralists and pacifists who dominate the " peace movement " in Europe and their neo-isolationist allies in the United States. . . .

Podhoretz does not actually assert that Orwell would have become a neo-conservative—only that if he were alive today " he would be taking

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

his stand with neo-conservatives and against the Left " in the context of the post-war struggle between totalitarianism and democracy, that he is not certain about Orwell's " socialism," as " there is no way of knowing whether and to what extent he would have changed his views in response to a changing world " in spite of Orwell's pride in his " power of facing unpleasant facts."

ORWELL in his lifetime underwent a political evolution from " Tory anarchist " to revolutionary militant who then turned libertarian-democrat-socialist. Would he today be a neo-conservative or a social democrat? This is not, I feel, as significant as what his attitude would have been towards the international conflict which he faced unequivocally. About that there can indeed be little doubt.

There is nothing, in my view, " outrageous " or " manipulatory " about Podhoretz's article. One may or may not agree with its thesis, but it is a reasoned argument; and Simon Leys himself has " lost his cool " by describing it in these terms without providing specific evidence for such harsh and summary dismissal. A certain special ideological animus perhaps accounts for it. The incongruity of his position can be seen in his mournful comment on

> the persisting stupidity of the progressives, who, instead of applying themselves at last to reading and understanding [Orwell], are allowing the enemy to confiscate their best writer.

I am afraid that the scourge of the Maoist revolutionaries is showing here the same *naïveté* as the scourge of the progressive intelligentsia did in his alibi for *Tribune*. How long might Simon Leys have to wait before his appeal for the " progressives " genuinely to outdo the " enemy " on Orwell is answered? Orwell died too early to see the outcome of such naive and confused hopes. What has happened since is that the Left became frightened at its move to the " Centre " and retreated to its threadbare illusions about making " fundamental changes " to a bourgeois-capitalist society (rather than consolidating all forces in free societies in the face of a threatening totalitarian system). Simon Leys can still face the difficult and disagreeable issues squarely. He has shown in China, as no one else did, an Orwellian " power of facing unpleasant facts."

Body Language

Are these battles about Orwell merely about " body-snatching "? Not at all, they are really about the historical significance of politics in our epoch: and for this, Orwell dead is as relevant as Orwell alive. His emasculators seem to feel that " he who possesses Orwell possesses the future." They merely demonstrate that he who misunderstands the past misunderstands the present.

Orwell once referred to a " generation of unteachables who hang around us like a necklace of corpses." One would have thought that a

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

number of myths believed by " progressives " would have been abandoned by now, when most human links in Orwell's " necklace of corpses " are literally dead. But it is not whole generations which are unteachable, but a section of the intelligentsia in each generation. Their present treatment of Orwell is only one example of their mythopoeic frame of mind.

Another is the perpetuation of old myths among the children—and grandchildren—of Orwell's generation of " progressives." They wanted so much at the time to believe in the guilt of the accused in the Moscow Trials; but they hotly defended the thesis of the innocence of Alger Hiss and the Rosenbergs. After Khrushchev's " secret speech " it is no longer possible to perpetuate the first myth, but that, as it happens, is only an additional motive for perpetuating the second. " Innocence " persists, in spite of all the Philbys and Blunts, and all the comprehensive evidence sifted and analysed by the authors of historical books on the two cases—*Perjury* by Alan Weinstein and *The Rosenberg File* by Ronald Radosh and Joyce Milton. These authors were not "anti-communists." Weinstein was a " progressive " when he began his book, Radosh and Milton probably still are. To perpetuate the myths of the innocence of Hiss and of the Rosenbergs may not make much sense in terms of argument and logic; but it does make it easier, psychologically, to preserve a certain kind of political faith.

We have here again the familiar mechanism of symmetrism: Stalin was certainly evil (nobody can deny that he got rid of a number of innocent people; but then so did the Americans). As against "the Great Terror " (Robert Conquest) in the USSR under Stalin, there was " the Great Fear " (David Caute) in the USA under Joseph McCarthy; Bukharin was innocent, but then so was Hiss. There were, perhaps, some differences in scale and even, possibly, in character between the Soviet deportation of nationalities and the American wartime internment of the *Nisei*, just as there might be no exact parallel between the fate of the scores of millions of Gulag victims and the fate of Miss Lillian Hellman and "the Hollywood Ten." But is it all not similar " in principle "?

Given this psychological predisposition, contemporary " progressives " show little inclination to ask themselves difficult questions. They concentrate their energy on American misdemeanours to improve the balance; they try desperately, for instance, to rehabilitate Alger Hiss and the Rosenbergs.[16] The result is the perpetuation of myths which should

[16] When Hiss was interviewed on BBC TV his innocence was taken for granted: he was treated as a victim of a self-evident frame-up. The case of the Rosenbergs is still considered " controversial." It constantly crops up in the correspondence columns of various magazines (e.g. *The Spectator* in England, *The Nation* in the USA). Hardly a year has gone by without a new book, TV programme, film, or play on Hiss or the Rosenbergs. For instance, reviewing one such attempted " rehabilitation "—the film *Daniel*—in *The Times* (13 January 1984). David Robinson wrote with a snappiness that defied a thousand years of jurisprudence: " The probability now seems to be that they were innocent, but that is hardly relevant." The statement that the question of guilt in atomic spying " is hardly relevant " is staggering. Robinson also mentioned the Barbican retrospective, " Thoughtcrimes," which " is designed to show the need for vigilance in warding off the nightmares like Orwell's *1984* or McCarthy's 1950. . . ."

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

have died long ago. It is the attitude behind such myths which provides the motives for the present operation on Orwell.

CONSIDER this recent episode in *The Guardian*.[17] It published on 17 December 1983 an article by R. W. Johnson, " 007: Licence to Kill." The author, an Oxford don, developed a conspiracy theory for the shooting down of the Korean airliner. He put the blame for it on the Americans. This fantasy was promptly reproduced in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* (18 January) and summarized in detail by *Trybuna Ludu* (13 January). It was criticized by Professor R. V. Jones (*The Guardian*, 20 January), who referred to Johnson's assertion that in 1940 " Churchill had had foreknowledge of which cities were to be attacked by *Luftwaffe* and had deliberately withheld such information from Fighter Command." Professor Jones—a scientist and as author of *Most Secret War* (1978) the authority on the subject—characterized this as "a monstrous travesty of fact." He concluded that " Mr Johnson's readiness to misrepresent the facts in this instance is so blatant that it disqualifies him as an analyst of such an international tragedy as the Korean airliner." In his rejoinder, " KAL 007 conspiracy theory that shouldn't be sidetracked " (*The Guardian*, 25 January), R. W. Johnson lamely replied by expressing his hope that Professor Jones " will not persist in jumping from the scarcely connected facts of the Coventry raid to the confident assertion that all was just as the US told us it was in the case of the KAL tragedy . . . ."

Such flights of ideological fancy would not be worth mentioning except for the fact that they illustrate the persistence of myth-making tendencies in the present-day Left. The political attitude behind it is not all that different from the hatred of the West which motivated their " progressive " forefathers. R. W. Johnson, in his article " Churchill Airstrip " (*New Society*, 19 January), writes:

> Less than three weeks into 1984, most of us are already terminally bored by discussions of whether the age of Big Brother has/will/might arrive. This is a pity. If you think about it, Big Brother was just a personalized flourish at the summit of the society Orwell envisaged. The far more fundamental fact was the division of the world into the three great competing blocks, Oceania, Eurasia and Eastasia.

According to Johnson, Churchill not only cold-bloodedly sacrificed Coventry, but his foolishly-based foreign policy rested on a fundamental error:

> The problem which all British governments have had since 1945 was that Churchill's grand design was wrong, indeed a disaster—but that it had been legitimated forever by the quixotic triumph of 1940.

[17] Just how far the present *Guardian* has strayed from the tradition of the old *Manchester Guardian* has been documented by Peter Deli, " The *Manchester Guardian* and the Soviet Purges 1936–38." *Survey* (Spring 1984). Its current symmetrism—possible only if real and fundamental distinctions get blurred by calling them " irrelevant " or " immaterial "—is constantly manifested: " Whether George Orwell had set *1984* in the Soviet Union, the USA or Ruritania, is immaterial; what matters is his prediction of the progressive loss of civil liberties, the centralisation of power and the increasing ability of this power to manipulate " (Martin Ryle in *The Guardian*, 23 April 1984).

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> Accordingly they have tried to sidle away from the Churchill heritage obliquely, without facing up to the need to deal with that heritage in the same way that the Russians needed to confront the legacy of stalinism with a positive campaign of de-stalinisation. For Britain's future now clearly lies with Eurasia, not with Oceania.

For Johnson, Britain's future now clearly lies with the East not with the West. It is this which explains Mr Johnson's myth-making about the Korean airliner and the anti-Americanism of his conspiracy theory (though it does not excuse the waywardness of his " de-stalinisation " reference). But why drag the anti-Soviet Orwell into a pro-Soviet argument?

What accounts for the strange mixture? How is it—why should it be—that attitudes directly contrary to Orwell's own on Soviet and communist affairs are coupled with his ostensible endorsement by the new generation of " progressives "? The answer seems to lie in the contemporary history of the Left, and especially in the evolution of the New Left during the quarter of a century since its inception. When it emerged after Khrushchev's 1956 speech and the Soviet suppression of the Hungarian revolution it was, under the impact of these two shocks, at its most critical about Soviet actions. (That is why Raymond Williams could write that it respected Orwell " *especially* in its early years.") But gradually the New Left shifted its position. It moved from its early " anti-Stalinist " stance to an attitude which is not antagonistic to, or is helpful to, Soviet policies. The conservative enemy at home, not the totalitarian enemy abroad, is the main enemy! The old " progressive " impulse slowly but surely reasserted itself, and resulted in an increasing obliteration of the original distinctions between the Old and the New Left. This political evolution could be observed from the time of the *Universities and Left Review* to the present, when its successor, *New Left Review*, exhibits how the old " *Newspeak* " of the Old Left has merged with the new " *Newspeak* " of the New Left.[18]

THE adaptation of " *Newspeak* " to current realities also goes on in the Soviet Union and other communist countries. The necessity of " conquering the language " has been a continuous consideration ever since Lenin expressed the idea. At present Soviet linguists have been given the task of preparing a monumental " Leninist Dictionary " which is supposed to provide an authoritive interpretation of the philological legacy of the Soviet founding father. The editor of this " Dictionary," Pyotr Denisov of the Soviet Academy of Science, explained:

> Lenin was a great innovator not only in politics but also in linguistics. . . . The Leninist word had a beneficial influence on the language of Soviet publications and official documents. . . . The writings of Lenin are in many respects the culmination of the development of the classical Russian language of the nineteenth century associated with

[18] See my article, " Of Myths and Horrors," *Encounter*, February 1980.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> the flourishing of Russian *belles lettres*, materialist philosophy and political publications. Lenin's writings begin the new—Soviet —phase.

Denisov provided some information about the " Dictionary " in an interview given to Edward Krustkaln from the Novosti Press Agency (*Trybuna Ludu*, 4 May 1984):

> The work of the index has demonstrated again the wealth of Lenin's language. For instance, Lenin used 12,000 words once only, while the overall number of words used by him amounts to 37,500. I would like to add by way of a comparison that Shakespeare used only 15,000 words, Cervantes and Pushkin—about 20,000.

Almost every word used by Lenin in the fifth edition of his *Collected Works* (over 50 volumes) will have a special entry in the five volumes of the new " Dictionary." The publication of the first volume is scheduled for 1984. Clearly the enterprise " overtakes and surpasses " even the Orwellian imagination.

In the fatherland of Czeslaw Milosz no such monumental works are planned,but Milosz's classic " Murti-bing " is being brushed up in the Poland of General Jaruzelski. The official *Trybuna Ludu* now regularly runs a special column entitled " Words We Are Using." Polishing up the old vocabulary, it offers a new *duckspeak* for " the masses " whose semantic sensitivities have, after all, been profoundly affected by the Solidarity era. In order to restore some credibility and lustre to the old " *Newspeak*," it gives seemingly rational definitions for such concepts as " Socialism . . . Imperialism . . . Liberalism . . . Conservatism . . . Anarchism . . . Dialectics," etc. This last concept is described (*Trybuna Ludu*, 21–22 January 1984) as providing " the ground for a better understanding and explanation of reality." A better, neo-Orwellian definition might be that it represents the phenomenon of double-talk rationalizing " Doublethink."

An entry on " democracy " (*Trybuna Ludu*, 14–15 April 1984) is a good example of these attempts to make " *Newspeak* " " viable " again. " The contemporary bourgeoisie reduces democracy to the general right to vote for politicians." By contrast: " the provision of real political and economic power for the people is the fundamental purpose of the socialist revolution." The benefits of " social democracy " are the superior fruits of " really existing socialism," while the choices offered in the Western countries are a contemptible substitute for genuine people's power.

An even more striking example was provided in " Words We Are Using," in an entry on " Totalitarianism " (a word which *Trybuna Ludu* does not normally use) which claimed that:

> In the '30s and '40s the concept had—rightly—an unambiguous meaning: it became a synonym for state terror, fascist genocide, and the violation of human rights. In the '50s, however, the concept began a new career. In the period of cold war the experts on anti-communist propaganda began applying the term to socialist

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> countries. . . . For 30 years, the whole powerful machinery of Western propaganda has been used to identify the concept with really existing socialism.

The column, nicely combining " dialectics " with historical falsification, went on to say that this was a " distorting picture " and that it is the USA which was founded through the employment of totalitarian methods, methods which are used in its various genocidal client states.

The fact that the column was published on April Fool's Day, 1984, is probably of no dialectical significance.

ONE further Western example, the last and, perhaps, the least. In some respects, young Christopher Hitchens is not quite representative of the New Left's evolution; nevertheless he reflects it, both in its " progressive " regression and in its contradictoriness about Orwell.

In his early " Trotskyist " period, at the beginning of his journalistic career, Christopher Hitchens was very censorious about things Soviet (that hopelessly degenerated " workers' state," that monstrously bureaucratic collectivism, etc.)— conspicuously more so than other members of the New Left. In his more recent writings one can detect an increasing ambiguity in his attitudes to pro- and anti-Soviet writings. Take, for example, his review in the *New Statesman* (22 May 1981) of the book *Cockburn Sums Up* (Quartet, 1981), by the late (and to the end unreconstructed) Stalinist Claud Cockburn, who was an ingenious representative of Soviet viewpoints in the 1930s (in the *Daily Worker* and in *The Week*,[19] the influential disinformation bulletin which he produced). Hitchins considered him something of a father figure in spite of his having been a " rank Stalinist " who remained " proud of having told lies for his propaganda causes." Although, as Hitchens tells us, he had " some vicious arguments " with him " about Spain, Orwell, the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact," etc., he considered him " a great journalist " who reminded him " of Orwell's description of Dickens—a man generously angry. . . ." His generous anger, like that of Wilfred Burchett, was somewhat narrowly selective. It did not include communist atrocities. And we know what Orwell thought of the Cockburns in the 1930s. The incongruity of Hitchens' enthusiasm both for the apostle of intellectual integrity and for the cynical liar who even in the 1970s continued to produce reminiscences which were still full of palpable fabrications tells us volumes about Hitchens' ambivalences. The juxtaposition of the two figures—Orwell and Cockburn, the opponent and the supporter of the Moscow Trials, both of whom he described as " Dreyfusards "—tells us something about Hitchens' deficient perception of Orwellian values.

All this fatuity becomes understandable in the light of what I have referred to as the recidivism of the New Left. What the experience of the

[19] See Donald Watt, " The Week That Was," *Encounter*, May 1972.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

1930s taught the then " progressive " poet W. H. Auden, later found expression in his celebrated reference to it as a " low, dishonest decade." But Hitchens—in his thrillingly vicarious, if belated, adolescent excitement—describes them as " the stirring Thirties," a remark which may offer a clue to the psychological sources of his political muddle. Whom will it surprise that in a polemic with Norman Podhoretz (*Harpers*, February 1983), he tried to rescue Orwell from the reactionary clutches of this neo-conservative monster? Or that in his friendly review of Bernard Crick's biography of Orwell (*New Statesman*, 28 November 1980), Hitchens declared that " its chief strength lies in its thoroughness and its honesty "? (It may only be a case of one left hand washing the other.)

Eggs, Omelettes And Good Cheer

Bernard Crick, to crown his Orwellian labours, has just produced a new edition of *1984* with his own introduction and annotations (Clarendon Press, Oxford). It is quite beyond my critical powers to describe the triviality of its textual analysis, the meandering obfuscations of its arguments, and the pedantic tedium of its Lit. Crit.-cum-Political Science style. When Nigel Dennis cracked that Crick's writing on the late George Orwell was " a fate worse than death," he had not then read Crick's new introduction to *1984*. It is difficult to imagine that anyone who has read all 136 pages of it (154 with annotations) will have enough stamina left to read the novel itself.

In Crick's introduction Orwell becomes a convenient ventriloquist's dummy. The squeaking message is simple: the novel is just a satire. The " Seven Satiric Thrusts "—Crick's *summa* of the novel—are a *mélange* of the obvious and the flat, at the border of the ridiculous. Like a long explanatory footnote to a joke, they most surely deprive the reader of any joy in savouring the novel or understanding its significance. Needless to say, there is also the obsessive standard reference to " body-snatching " and inconsequential sophistries about Orwell's critique of the Left:

> He was expert in the art of rubbing his own cat's fur backwards and he enjoyed doing just that. Not to be explicitly socialist is not the same as being implicitly anti-socialist, as body-snatchers for neo-conservatism now argue. . . .

The text was described in *The Observer* (25 March 1984) by Conor Cruise O'Brien as " a classical example of misplaced and excessive ingenuity, obfuscating the text it is intended to illuminate."

Somehow, for Crick, *1984* is intended not only to " warn " and to " rally," but also to " cheer us up." To assist the cheerfulness, he even manages to give it almost a happy ending:

> The real ending of the book is not on the note of sado-masochistic horror of the scene in room 101; nor on the picture of a gin-soaked, broken man loving an imaginary leader, but on the words " so late a date as 2050." That is the date for the final translation of everything

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> into Newspeak. What has held it up so long, we are authoritatively told by *The Times*, is " the difficulty " (i.e. the impossibility) of translating writers like " Shakespeare, Swift, Byron, Dickens." May clear language and good literature sustain us.

So " the real ending " of *1984* is after all not so gloomy. We can remain cheerful. Professor Crick assures us that Orwell himself meant it so. For Crick, *1984* is a " satire " which is " harsh but good-humoured "—an echo of the blurb on its 1951 edition which first presented it under the obtuse description: " *A good-natured satire on dictatorship.*"

The shallowness of so many comments on Orwell is perhaps best highlighted by the words of a Russian dissident. Natalya Hessè emigrated to the West, and she described her last meeting with the Sakharovs:

> Between questions about the life of our dear ones—who has been arrested? whose homes have been searched?—we recalled Orwell, and I think this was not coincidental. We have lived to see the year predicted by Orwell—1984. And it may seem strange to a Western person, it may seem that Orwell has nothing to do with a real life, that this terrible utopia still remains a utopia or maybe an anti-utopia. However, the Soviet authorities—our dear KGB—have overtaken Orwell by four whole years. In 1980, Andrei Dmitrievich Sakharov and Elena Georgievna Bonner were plunged into a world that surpassed Orwell's nightmarish fantasies . . .
>
> *The Times*, 9 April 1984,
> and *New York Review of Books*, 12 April 1984.

For the Sakharovs, cut off from the world and fighting for their lives, 1984 has indeed been a nightmare. The spectacle of Big Brother's deadly spite towards perhaps the greatest living Russian provided no occasion for Western good cheer. . . .

The Ideology Of Rubbish

The " Orwellization " of Orwell continues. The number of examples of rubbish I have inflicted on the reader are just a small portion of the proliferation of " Orwellian " folly occasioned by the advent of 1984. Who can follow it all? It is, alas, a part of a wider phenomenon involving the general political contamination of our cultural scene and of the " *Newspeak* " pollution of language. In all of this the traditional analytical distinctions between " Right " and " Left " are increasingly difficult to maintain. This seems only too obvious to those who write about the totalitarian experience they have personally undergone. A recent Polish exile in Paris, Kazimierz Brandys, reiterates in *Le Monde* (26 March 1984):

> The writer who arrives [in Western Europe] from Warsaw, Prague, or Budapest . . . is struck by the absence of new ideas. The ideological divisions between Right and Left seem to him to have been overtaken by the experience of his country. He had got used to dividing countries between democratic and totalitarian ones.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

This, however, the contemporary Western Left is reluctant to accept. Why? Doubtless during this period the influence of " progressives " on the evolution of the Left has been growing. This can be seen in the evolution of the parties and organizations of the " Left " in the West. In the United States the Democratic Party shifted from Truman, Kennedy and Johnson to Edward Kennedy, Walter Mondale, and Gary Hart (and the " Americans for Democratic Action " shifted from anti-communism to McGovernism). In Britain the Labour Party moved from Attlee and Gaitskell to Foot and Kinnock (while the secession of the SDP weakened its moderate wing). In Germany the Social Democratic Party shifted from Kurt Schumacher and Ernst Reuter to Brandt and Vogel; in Sweden Erlander was replaced by Palme; in Greece there was the rise of *Pasok* and Papandreou.

In other Western countries, like France and Italy, the shift was not so pronounced; but everywhere there was a new polarization reflected in the labels differentiating " socialists " and " social democrats." The Socialist International itself evolved from an organization of an anti-communist Left (under Braunthal and de Broûckere) to an anti-anti-communist one which, under Brandt and Palme, came close to neutralism. The marked change in the climate of opinion on the Left found its expression not only in the emergence of the so-called " Hard Left " (in Britain, Tony Benn; in France, Jean-Pierre Chevènement), but also in the opportunistic behaviour of such right-wing Labour politicians with formerly strong anti-communist credentials as Denis Healey and Roy Hattersley.

WOULD Orwell be able to recognize the Labour Party he once supported? It is now officially committed to unilateral nuclear disarmament. Would he recognize the *Tribune* group which while he was alive still supported, however reluctantly, British membership of NATO?

Was Orwell a " pre-nuclear " visionary? Clearly, one new ideological event has ocurred: the splitting of the atom has led to the splitting of the " progressive " soul. Some are now more concerned with the vision of the Apocalypse (the end is near) than with the vision of Utopia (Paradise is near). Others, like Raymond Williams and E. P. Thompson, try to combine the two; it is a position logically more appropriate for good Christians than for good Marxists.

In the Soviet Union the post-Khrushchev leaders abandoned the Utopian perspective of the Third Party Programme of 1961 (which proclaimed that communism would be achieved by 1980) and codified the new ideological line in the formula of " really existing socialism," i.e. the consecration of the internal status quo, and the relegation of the classless Utopia to an ever more distant future. That freezing of Utopia also entails a freeze on dialectics: no new theoretical propositions are offered.

In the West the ideological bankruptcy of the communist movement is matched by the ideological sterility of the " progressives." In all their theoretical dissertations and debates there are no specific proposals as to

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

how the socialist society is, at long last, supposed to work in terms of political organization and economic planning, motives and incentives, distribution and limitations of power, the role of the free or " liberated " individual and of the market. The debates between the " theoreticians " of the New Left are even more vague and abstract than those of their ancestors. The current, very abstract discussions among " progressives," which at the moment divide " Socialists " from " Coalitionists,"[20] are entirely devoted to strategy and tactics in " the struggle for power." One can still find Williams tirelessly repeating the monotonous petition for the Left " to develop contemporary (including new) analyses and policies " (*The Guardian*, 20 February 1984)—without himself, of course, offering any such original insights.

In France, the Communists and the Left socialists from CERES vote for Mitterrand in the Chamber of Deputies and criticize him outside it, while the former *gauchiste* professor of sociology Alain Touraine declares that " the essential merit of the government of the Left is to have relieved us of the embarrassment of the socialist ideology."

Thus, the old theories of " socialist transformation " are no longer usable, and no new ideas are available. The " Soviet model " (with its political oppression and Stalinist rigidities of planning) is no longer attractive. The Yugoslav model (with its " market socialism ") is in economic trouble; its " workers' self-management " is increasingly seen as an empty ideological alibi, for in practice it does not at all mean " Workers' Control " of the Western progressive dream. What remains is the allure of power for the activists, who use ideological rationalizations for their " idealistic " motives. In a new " socialist " society Arthur Scargill may well drive a Rolls-Royce instead of a mere Jaguar, but miners will not have the right to strike.

What then is the meaning of " socialism " for those who reject the " really existing " models? If there is no clear answer to this question in 1984, how can one talk about Orwell's " socialism " in the context of 1984 as if it were a proposition which had real meaning? There is no doubt, as everyone admits, that he did consider himself a " socialist " and " a man of the Left." But it is difficult to imagine what these labels would mean to Orwell in the present, now that they have become even more hazy (even in his own time he was unclear about them).

In his article on " Catastrophic Gradualism " (1945) he rejected the definition of socialism as " common ownership of the means of production," as leading to " centralized control " and " a new form of oligarchy." He also condemned " catastrophic gradualism " as the standard justification for " progressive " terror (" you can't make an omelette without breaking eggs ") and went on to attack Kingsley Martin for using it:

Stalin, he admitted, had done terrible things, but on balance he had

[20] See, in particular, Eric Hobsbawm in *Marxism Today* (March 1983) and Raymond Williams in *New Socialist* (March/April 1983).

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> served the cause of " progress " and a few million " liquidations " cannot obscure this fact.

To the question of " Yes, but where is the omelette? " Orwell wrote, the answer " is likely to be: ' Oh well, you can't expect everything to happen all in a moment.' "

The Transvaluation Of Values

Forty years have passed and it is no longer a question of " a moment," but of an epochal experience. Orwell in 1984 would have to ask himself, therefore, whether his point of reference (in another passage about socialism, in the same essay) was sufficient: " In the name of Socialism the Russian regime has committed almost every crime that can be imagined, but at the same time its evolution is away from Socialism, unless one redefines that word in terms that no Socialist of 1917 would have accepted." But in 1984, surely, a " 1917 " definition of socialism which does not take into account the experience of two-thirds of the century would seem woefully inadequate.

Orwell was at the time still satisfied with the easy formula about the need to combine " planning with freedom." But there were some seeds of doubt in his mind about it, as his review (*The Observer*, 9 April 1944) of F. A. Hayek's *The Road to Serfdom* indicates. Although he criticized its propositions, he also wrote:

> In the negative part of Professor Hayek's thesis there is a great deal of truth. It cannot be said too often—at any rate, it is not being said nearly often enough—that collectivism is not inherently democratic, but, on the contrary, gives to a tyrannical minority such powers as the Spanish Inquisitors never dreamed of.

Nor, of course, did the author of *Animal Farm* have any illusions about widening privileges in a Soviet-type society. But he did move from the " Revolution Betrayed " type of perception implied by *Animal Farm* (and by the reference to the 1917 socialists) to a more sophisticated argument in *1984*—where it is not just a question of a privileged new ruling class, but of a totalitarian organization of society according to the needs of power, its exercise and its perpetuation.

> The Party is not a class in the old sense of the word. . . . The older kind of Socialist, who had been trained to fight against something called " class privilege," assumed that what is not hereditary cannot be permanent. He did not . . . pause to reflect that hereditary aristocracies have always been short-lived, whereas adoptive organizations such as the Catholic Church have sometimes lasted for hundreds or thousands of years.

Crick who asserts that *1984* is " neither wholly nor obsessively concerned with a totalitarian future," has produced a characteristically confused account of Orwell's analysis of it:

> Most previous writers on totalitarianism, including Orwell himself in

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> essays, had stressed its revolutionary and restless character, its creation of societies in a perpetual state of mobilization for change—what Trotsky had called (encouragingly) " permanent revolution." The general view was also that totalitarian parties in power would seek to enrol more members rather than less. Orwell, prompted by Burnham, sees that cold war and atomic stalemate could lead instead to " stability," or rather a ghastly freezing of human aspiration and social change into a caste, not even a class, society. . . .

This comment indicates that Crick (a) has still not grasped Orwell's meaning; (b) does not understand totalitarianism; (c) does not know what Trotsky's theory of " permanent revolution " is specifically about. (It is, as every undergraduate Marxist knows, about the telescoping of " bourgeois " and " socialist " revolutions in backward countries, and not about the " creation of societies in a perpetual state of mobilization for change.")

As for a programme of equality, promising " fair shares " for all and actually banishing economic inequalities:

> Ingsoc, which grew out of the earlier Socialist movement and inherited its phraseology, has in fact carried out the main item in the Socialist programme; with the result, forseen and intended beforehand, that economic inequality has been made permanent.

Crick's annotation to this disturbing passage is the bland apologetic assurance to the reader that " Orwell is not attacking socialism, but a simplistic version. . . ."

Orwell was quite unambiguous about a certain naive purism so often invoked by disappointed " true believers." He approvingly paraphrased Arthur Koestler on this " notion that so-and-so-has ' betrayed ' . . . [which] is ever present in left wing thought ":

> It is not merely that "power corrupts "; so also do the ways of attaining power. Therefore all efforts to regenerate society *by violent means* lead to the cellars of the O.G.P.U., Lenin leads to Stalin, and would have come to resemble Stalin if he had happened to survive.
>
> *Collected Essays*, Vol. 3, p. 278

Similarly he made this trenchant comment on Trotsky:

> Trotsky, in exile, denounces the Russian dictatorship, but he is probably as much responsible for it as any man now living and there is no certainty that as a dictator he would be preferable to Stalin, though undoubtedly he has a much more interesting mind. The essential act is the rejection of democracy—that is, of the underlying values of democracy; once you have decided upon that, Stalin—or at any rate someone *like* Stalin—is already under way.
>
> *Collected Essays*, Vol. 1, p. 418

ORWELL is not the first (and one presumes not the last) major writer who has been subject to misinterpretation. But it is difficult to find a comparable case of ideological " reinterpretation " where

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the message of the author has undergone such a degree of distortion and corruption so soon—such a total reversal so early on.

The ideological need for it must be very great indeed because the process continues. Reviewing in *Tribune* (23 March 1984) the new edition of Raymond Williams' *Orwell*, Oliver Whitehead approves his thesis that:

> Orwell actually moved to the Left as he developed politically, not, as is often supposed, in the other direction. The cold war warriors who claim Orwell for themselves are profoundly wrong. . . . " In England," Orwell wrote towards the end of his life, " the immediate enemies of truthfulness, and hence of freedom of thought, are the press lords, the film magnates and the bureaucrats " and it is this insight which shaped some of the most significant sections of *1984*.

And in " a collection of radical essays " entitled *Nineteen Eighty-Four in 1984* (Comedia), David Widgery busies himself with " reclaiming " Orwell " from the Cold War fanatics."

Faced with this whirligig of absurdity, one can only recall Orwell's remark that " to be corrupted by totalitarianism one does not have to live in a totalitarian country. The mere prevalence of certain ideas can spread a kind of poison. . . ." But surely Orwell would not have imagined that he himself would be adopted by the " progressives," and used to spread the poison.

Looking at the whole story of Orwell between *1984* and 1984, one cannot help but feel a certain relief in reading a letter to the Editor of the *New Statesman* (6 January 1984) which honestly expresses, in " *Oldspeak*," an old straightforward sentiment:

> 1984 is the year for socialists to consign Orwell to the dustbin of history.

Alas, this is unlikely to happen. The " progressives " may well explore still other possibilities of " Orwellian transvaluation." What, for instance, should prevent them from " Orwellizing " *Darkness at Noon*, now that Arthur Koestler is safely dead? The " Cold Warriors " could again be accused of " body-snatching." One could almost hear the argument that what Koestler really had in mind was " Midnight in Manhattan "—Rubashov being modelled on Rosenberg, and Gletkin on Judge Irving Kaufman. . . .

In a recent book (*Headbirths, or the Germans Are Dying Out*) Günter Grass raised the question: " How will Sisyphus react to Orwell's decade? " The answer is now obvious. Judging by this mid-year history of Orwell in 1984, it will be the same old Sisyphean story all over again.

It is a dispiriting spectacle to see so many of our Western contemporaries (who enjoy freedom) wailing that Orwell predicted their present terrible enslavement. Yet we can take heart at the stirring effort of so many libertarian dissidents (who are actually enslaved) as they turn to the message of a writer who offers them the spiritual weapons of clarity and integrity. George Orwell will survive 1984.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Letters to the Editor

Leonard Schapiro Graduate Studentship Appeal

Sir,

We write to seek your support for a suitable memorial at the London School of Economics for the great scholar and teacher, Leonard Schapiro. Those of us who were his colleagues and students can think of no better way of commemorating his achievement than by establishing a studentship for postgraduates in Russian studies at LSE. It is therefore proposed to set up the Leonard Schapiro Graduate Studentship to enable postgraduates to pursue their studies for an M.Sc. or research degree.

The cost of postgraduate studies these days is high. It would be desirable from time to time to offer a full studentship; but even an award of £1,000 might enable a student from at home or abroad to continue at LSE, in which case the studentship could be shared between two or more candidates. The initial appeal is aimed at attracting £25,000.

Many of Leonard Schapiro's friends who were able to be present at the Memorial Meeting on 23 January will remember the warm tributes paid to him on that occasion. A text of the addresses is available from Miss Jennifer Pinney, Appeals Officer, London School of Economics, to whom contributions for the Leonard Schapiro Graduate Studentship should also be sent. (Cheques should be made payable to The LSE 1980s Fund.)

Maurice Cranston
Peter Reddaway
Dominic Lieven
Ellen Dahrendorf

The London School of Economics
Houghton Street
London WC2A 2AE England

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Our Contributors

LEWIS S. FEUER is Emeritus Professor of Sociology and Government at the University of Virginia. He is the author of *The Conflict of Generation* (Basic Books, 1969) and *Ideology and the Ideologists* (Harper & Row, 1975). He recently published a novelette, *The Case of the Revolutionist's Daughter: Sherlock Holmes Meets Karl Marx* (Prometheus Books, 1983).

CHARLES GATI is Professor of Political Science at Union College (Schenectady, NY) and Visiting Professor of Political Science at Columbia University. He is also a Senior Fellow at Columbia's Research Institute on International Change. Professor Gati's latest work, of which he is co-editor with Jan F. Triska, is *Blue-Collar Workers in Eastern Europe* (Allen & Unwin, 1980). His articles have appeared in *Foreign Affairs*, *Foreign Policy*, *World Politics*, and other journals. The present article is part of a longer, book-length manuscript on the subject.

ELLIOT R. GOODMAN is Professor of Political Science at Brown University. He is the author of *The Soviet Design for a World State* (1960), *The Fate of the Atlantic Community* (1975), and numerous articles in scholarly journals.

GYORGY KRASSO was born in Budapest on 19 October 1932. He was expelled from Budapest University in the spring of 1955. He was arrested on 15 November 1956, and was subsequently given a 10-year sentence. He was released under the amnesty of spring 1963, was again arrested in autumn 1963, detained, put on trial and acquitted.

ROBIN MUNRO studied in China from 1977–79, and is now teaching Chinese language in London and conducting research into contemporary Chinese politics. He has translated and introduced *China: Crossroads Socialism* by Chen Erjin (1984), and has contributed articles to *The China Quarterly* and *Index On Censorship*.

RICHARD PIPES is Baird Professor of History, Harvard University; 1981–82 he served as Director of East European and Soviet Affairs, National Security Council.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Introducing:

SOVIET
NATIONALITY SURVEY

The West long failed to notice what every Soviet leader since Lenin has Known – that the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (U.S.S.R.) has a nationality problem. The U.S.S.R. and Russia, so the thinking went, were one and the same.

The last two decades have witnessed a substantial change in Western attitudes. Although misconceptions still abound, the Soviet 'nationality question' is now acknowledged to be both important and far from answered. The non-Russian nationalities of the U.S.S.R. have become a legitimate subject of inquiry. But, one thing has not changed – Soviet nationality affairs still do not receive the attention they merit.

Soviet Nationality Survey has as its immediate goal to serve as a newsletter providing concise and topical information about the 'other Russia' – its peoples, its problems and its relationship to Russians. Our long-term goal is to illuminate broad trends and serve as a handy reference guide to Soviet nationality affairs. We hope eventually to become an indispensable source of news for policy makers, journalists, academics and businesspersons interested in the Soviet nationality question.

Soviet Nationality Survey is published by **Suchasnist** Publishers, whose other periodical publications include **Suchasnist**, a Ukrainian-language monthly, and **Forum**, a Russian-language quarterly specialising in Soviet nationality affairs.

Soviet Nationality Survey will appear ten times annually. The price of a one year subscription is £20/30 $ U.S., or the equivalent in other currencies. Students, and non-waged, please deduct 30% from the subscription cost.

✂ ---------- >

I wish to subscribe to **Soviet Nationality Survey** for:

one year, at £20, 30 $ U.S.
two years, at £37, 55 $ U.S.
three years, at £50, 75 $ U.S.
(30% discount for students and non-waged).

Please make cheques payable to **Soviet Nationality Survey**.

Name. . . . . .
Address . . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . .

Mail coupon and remittance to:
Soviet Nationality Survey,
15 Sherringham Avenue,
London N17 9RS, England.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Introducing:

FORUM—ФОРУМ

A Russian-language quarterly devoted to Soviet and East European social and political affairs.

Editor: Vladimir Malinkowitsch.

Forum is a journal with a democratic orientation. The democratic orientation of this journal is based upon its objection to the totalitarian nature of the Soviet regime (with similar objections to other political dictatorships in other countries, whatever their ideology). **Forum** also provides a critical appraisal of the historical legacy of Tsarist Russia, support for the Human-Rights Movement in the U.S.S.R. and Eastern Europe, and encompasses an anti-imperialistic outlook that lends support to the national movements struggling for freedom and independence within the Soviet empire.

Forum has a format of 240 pages, and (as of March, 1984) six issues have appeared. Each issue is regularly divided thematically into the following sections: "Problems of the Democratic Movement", "The Gulag Archipelago today", "Philosophy, Religion and Ethics", "Labour, the Workers Movement and problems of independent trade unions", "the Soviet Union on the contemporary world arena", "the Polish experience", "From the Past", "Nationalities problems".

Each issue of **Forum** includes articles, analytical reviews, interviews with known human-rights activists from the U.S.S.R. — Ludmilla Alekseeva, Boris Vail, Pyotr Grigorenko, Pyotr Egides, Kronid Lubarsky, Boris Shragin, and from Eastern Europe — Milovan Djilas, Bruno Kalninsh, Jan Jozef Lipski, Mikhail Mychailov, Adam Michnik and others.

Forum is published quarterly by "Suchasnist" publishers, whose other periodical publications include a Ukrainian-language monthly, Suchasnist, and the English-language **Soviet Nationality Survey**, which appears ten times annually.

I wish to subscribe to **Forum** for one year at: 50 D.Marks, £10, 25$ U.S., 135 French Francs, or the equivalent in other currencies.

Please make cheques payable to **Forum**.

Name. . . . . .

Address. . . . . .

. . . . . .

. . . . . .

Mail coupon and remittance to:
Forum
Ukrainische Gesellschaft für Auslandstudien
e.v. Müllerstr. 33, Rgb.,
8000 München 5, W. Germany.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

If you are interested in the study of politics
and government, you are invited to join

THE SOUTHERN POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION

MEMBERSHIP INCLUDES

THE JOURNAL OF POLITICS

THE JOURNAL OF POLITICS is a quarterly devoted to enriching and advancing the knowledge of politics. Inside its pages all methods, positions, conceptualizations, and techniques are expounded by authors who know their subjects and who back their ideas with careful research and positive scholarship. There is no bias in THE JOURNAL OF POLITICS—toward theory, American politics, or anything else. It is an open journal. Missing it is missing an adventure into the character of political variety.

Upon receipt of this form you will begin a one-year membership in The Southern Political Science Association, including a subscription to THE JOURNAL OF POLITICS.

_____	Individual	$ 17.00
_____	Student or Retired	$ 10.00
_____	Institution	$ 25.00
_____	Foreign Postage (additional)	$ 5.50

Name_____

Address _____

_____

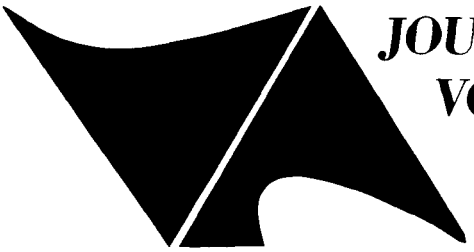
_____

Zip Code

Please make check or money order payable to THE JOURNAL OF POLITICS. Send to:

THE JOURNAL OF POLITICS
University of Florida
Gainesville, FL, USA 32611

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



JOURNAL OF VOLUNTARY ACTION RESEARCH

The JOURNAL OF VOLUNTARY ACTION RESEARCH is a publication of the Association of Voluntary Action Scholars, an autonomous interdisciplinary and interprofessional association of academics and other professionals engaged in research, scholarship, or programs related to voluntary action in its many forms. By voluntary action is meant any type of noncoerced human behavior, collective or individual, that is engaged in because of a commitment to values other than direct, immediate remuneration. Thus, voluntary action encompasses social, religious, and political groups and movements, as well as voluntarism, philanthropy, altruism, and leisure behavior.

Recent Issues Featured

COMPARING VOLUNTEERS AND EMPLOYEES IN A TEST OF ETZIONI'S COMPLIANCE TYPOLOGY
Jone L. Pearce

SELECTION, SOCIALIZATION, AND FOUR TYPES OF MEMBERS IN THE RED CROSS CHAPTER: A TYPOLOGY OF VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATION MEMBERS
David S. Adams

CORPORATE PHILANTHROPY AND INNER-CITY SOCIAL ACTION GROUPS: CAN PARTNERSHIP POLICIES SUCCEED?
Fred Sklar and Richard G. Ames

PRODUCTIVITY ASSESSMENT OF VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS IN NOT-FOR-PROFIT HUMAN SERVICES ORGANIZATIONS
Larry Gamm and Cathy Kassab

Published quarterly.

Editor: Jon Van Til, Rutgers University, Camden College of Arts and Sciences

Subscription rates: $40/yr. $80/2 yr., $120/3 yr. Surface mail outside U.S.A. add $12/yr.; Single copies $12. ISSN 0094-0607

Please address inquiries and orders to:
JOURNAL OF VOLUNTARY ACTION RESEARCH
Transaction Periodicals Consortium
Department 2000
Rutgers–The State University
New Brunswick, New Jersey 08903

Exclusive distributors in Europe and the British Isles:
Karger Libri AG, Petersgraben 31, P.O. CH-4009, Basel, Switzerland

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE Atlantic Community QUARTERLY

Editors: **Francis O. Wilcox and John D. Hickerson**

A Publication of the Atlantic Council of the United States

As the publication of the Atlantic Council, the journal aims to promote closer mutually advantageous ties between Western Europe, North America, Japan, Australia, and New Zealand. Its objective is greater security and more effective harmonization of economic and monetary policies. Its articles include policy recommendations on important foreign policy questions, drawing upon the knowledge and experience of individuals with extensive backgrounds in government, academia, and international relations. It explores problems governments must deal with, and makes recommendations about them.

Recent Issues Featured

Look Again: It's the West That's Strong, Moscow That's Weak	*Lord Carrington*
The Western Alliance: Strength Through Crisis	*Oliver Wright*
Can Europe Be Defended?	*Thomas A. Callaghan, Jr.*
The Alliance and Nuclear Weapons	*Roy Dean*
Review of U.S. Relations With The Soviet Union	*Lawrence S. Eagleburger*
Soviet Perspectives On the Reagan Administration	*Dimitri K. Simes*
Westpolitik: Germany and the Atlantic Alliance	*Gregory F. T. Winn*
Economics of the Atlantic Alliance	*Ralph P. Davidson*
The World Economy Today: Signs of Recovery	*Martin Feldstein*
The Teaching of Values and The Successor Generation	*Atlantic Council Policy Paper*
Strengthening Interparliamentary Consultation	*Atlantic Council Policy Paper*

Published four times a year. Founded 1962.

Subscription rates: Individuals $15/yr., $25/2 yr., $34/3 yr.; Institutions $25/yr., $45/2 yr., $62/3 yr.; Domestic first class $6/yr.; Outside U.S.A. add $2/yr. surface mail, $14/yr. airmail. Single copies (min. order $10) $4/individuals, $5/institutions (current issues); $7.50 (back issues). ISSN: 0004-6760

Please address inquiries and orders to:

Transaction Periodicals Consortium
Department 2000
Rutgers—The State University
New Brunswick, NJ 08903

Exclusive distributors for Europe and the British Isles:
Karger Libri AG, Petersgraben 31, P.O. CH-4009, Basel, Switzerland

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ASIAN SURVEY

A Monthly Review of Contemporary Asian Affairs

Articles in 1984:

URMILA PHADNIS · The Political Order in Sri Lanka Under the UNP

LOWELL DITTMER · Ideology and Organization in Post-Mao China

TAHIR AMIN · Afghanistan Resistance: Past, Present and Future

SHELDON W. SIMON · Southeast Asia & China: Security Perspectives

YOUNG CHOI · North Korean Military Buildup & Impact on Strategy

MARIA HSIA CHANG · Political Succession in the ROC on Taiwan

HANS H. BAERWALD · Japan's December 1983 House of Representatives Election: The Return of Coalition Politics

LAWRENCE SULLIVAN · The Rise of the Control Organs in the Chinese Communist Party, 1977–1983

K. FOSTER · The Reform of Provincial Party Committees in China: The Case of Zhejiang

P. K. BHARGAVA · Transfer from the Centre to the States in India

A special issue on current political and international developments in Asia, contributed by Soviet specialists and organized by the Institute of Oriental Studies of the U.S.S.R. Academy of Sciences, will be published in mid-year.

Rates: In the U.S., $30.00 for individuals. $55.00 for institutions, and $17.00 for students for one year. Subscribers elsewhere should add $4.50 postage. Single copies are $4.00 for individuals and $5.00 for institutions. Back issues from volume 14 are available at $6.00 each plus postage.

University of California Press

Journals Dept., Berkeley, CA 94720

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Summer 1984 Volume 38/1

The successful 1970s LDC debt financed growth is threatened in the '80s by contradictory international economic phenomena, threatening widespread debtor-nation loan defaults – an ominous portent for the entire international economic order. What are the prospects?

PERSPECTIVES ON GLOBAL DEBT

Interview: **Robert S. McNamara** ..... *The U.S Role in Resolving the Debt Crisis*
Carlos Díaz Alejandro ..... *International Markets in the 1980s*
Richard Weinert ..... *Coping with LDC Debt*
Henry S. Bloch ..... *Society, Business, and the Great Reschedulings*
John Williamson ..... *The Debt Crisis in Perspective*
Geraldo de Forbes ..... *The Brazilian Renegotiation Affair*
Barend de Vries ..... *Dealing with External Debt*
Shahid J. Burki ..... *A South Asian Outlook*
Thomas M. Callaghy ..... *Africa's Debt Crisis*

Published since 1947, the Journal has a readership in over 70 countries.

Subscription Rates:	One Year	Two Years	Three Years
Individual	$11.00	$21.00	$31.00
Institutions	$22.00	$43.00	$64.00

Foreign subscribers, except Canada, add $3.50 per year postage.

single issue price: $5.50

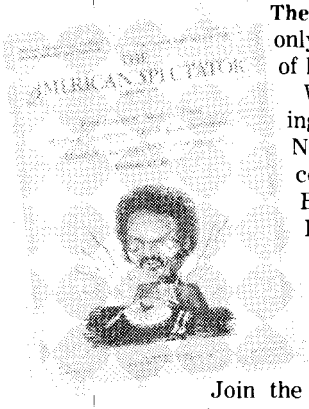
Issues sent only upon receipt of payment.

Mail all orders to: **Journal of International Affairs**
Box 4, International Affairs Building • Columbia University • New York, New York 10027

— At the forefront of facts and issues —

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The American Spectator is nervy with impudent opinions about politics, culture, and ideology.



Literate in its writing, independent in its thinking, **The American Spectator** is predictable in one respect only: It appeals to your intelligence and your sense of humor.

While **The American Spectator** takes delight in being irreverently funny, it can also be deadly serious. Not only does it take on the liberal media's sacred cows—Betty Friedan, Ralph Nader, Tip O'Neill, Bob Dole, Environmentalism, The New Industrial Policy—but it presents thoughtful analyses of ideas and people the media denigrate—Supply-Side Economics, Deregulation, the new Civil Rights Commission, Marva Collins, Thomas Sowell, Arthur Koestler, and Ronald Reagan.

Join the growing roster of subscribers to **The American Spectator**. The coupon contains an offer that will save you a heap of money. Mail it today.

" . . . nothing else quite like it on the American Scene."
—Irving Kristol

U.S. Election Year Special

THE AMERICAN SPECTATOR
P.O. Box 1969, Bloomington, Indiana 47402, U.S.A.

Open my trial subscription (8 giant, tabloid-sized issues) at your special money-saving price.

☐ Check for $11.95 enclosed ($15.95 outside U.S.A.). In return for my prepayment send me an additional issue. Full refund guaranteed if I don't like the first issue.

☐ Bill me (sorry, no additional issue). If I don't like my first issue I'll write cancel across the invoice, return it to you and owe nothing.

Name _____ (please print)

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Airmail rate outside U.S.A.: $37.95.

4PAA

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DIPLOMATIC HISTORY

The Journal of the Society for Historians of American Foreign Relations

Diplomatic History *is a quarterly journal featuring articles on American diplomacy and foreign affairs. Its goal is to keep readers abreast of the best current scholarship across the wide range of topics that interest diplomatic historians. Now in its seventh year of publication,* **Diplomatic History** *includes works by both established and rising scholars from the United States, Britain, Australia, and the People's Republic of China.*

To subscribe to **Diplomatic History** *or to receive a free examination copy, please use the order form below. Individual subscribers also receive membership in SHAFR and the quarterly* **SHAFR Newsletter.**

_____ *Please enter my one-year subscription to* **Diplomatic History** *at $16.50 (includes membership in SHAFR).*
_____ *Please send a free examination copy.*

Name _____

Address _____

_____

_____

Please enclose a check made payable to SHAFR in US dollars.

Return to: **SHAFR**
Department of History, 106 Dulles
Ohio State University
Columbus, OH 43210

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED